

# **OUR EMPIRE'S WONDROUS STORY**

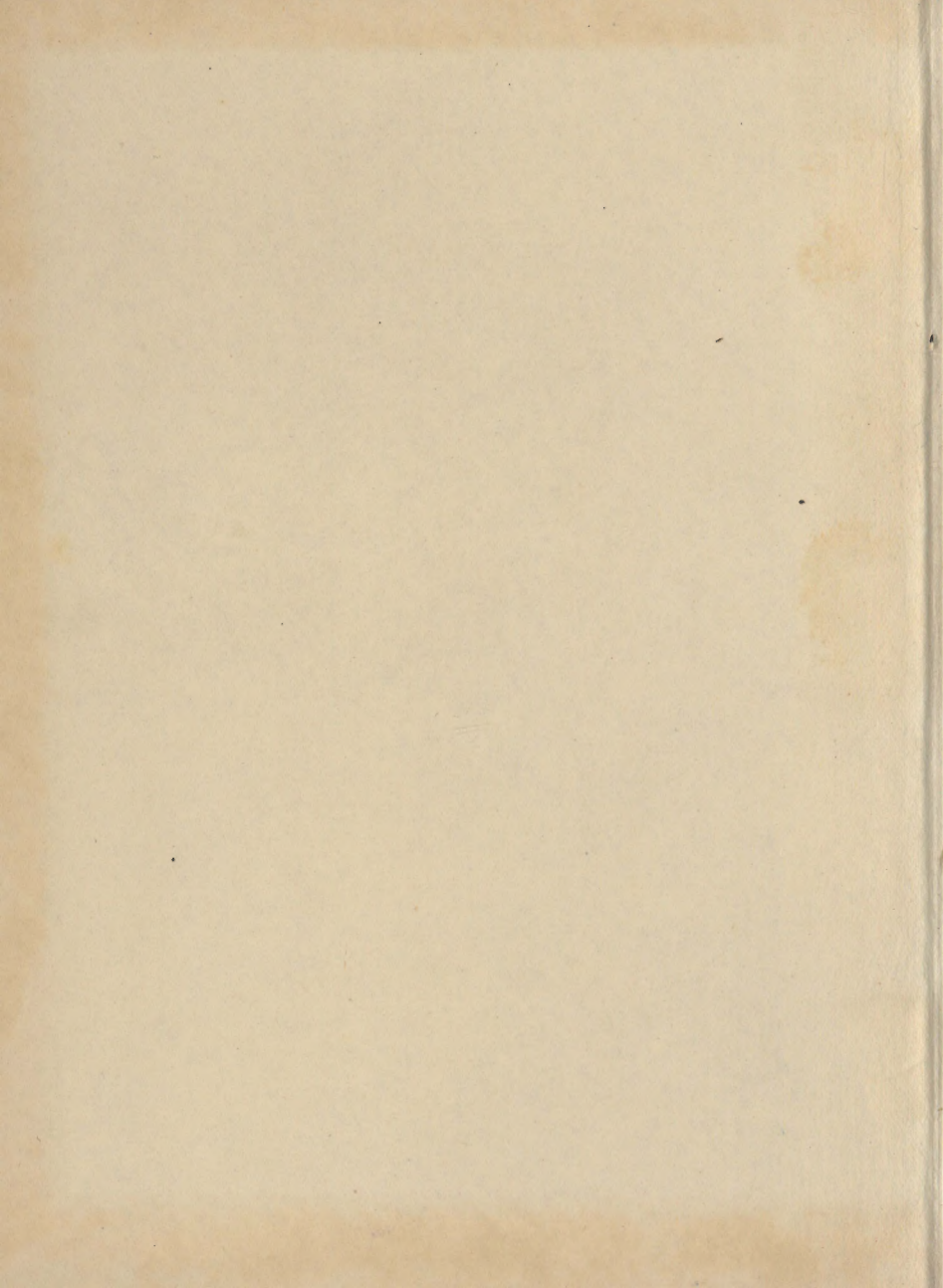
**BY C. BERNARD RUTLEY  
AND  
CECILY M. RUTLEY**

**No. 7.**

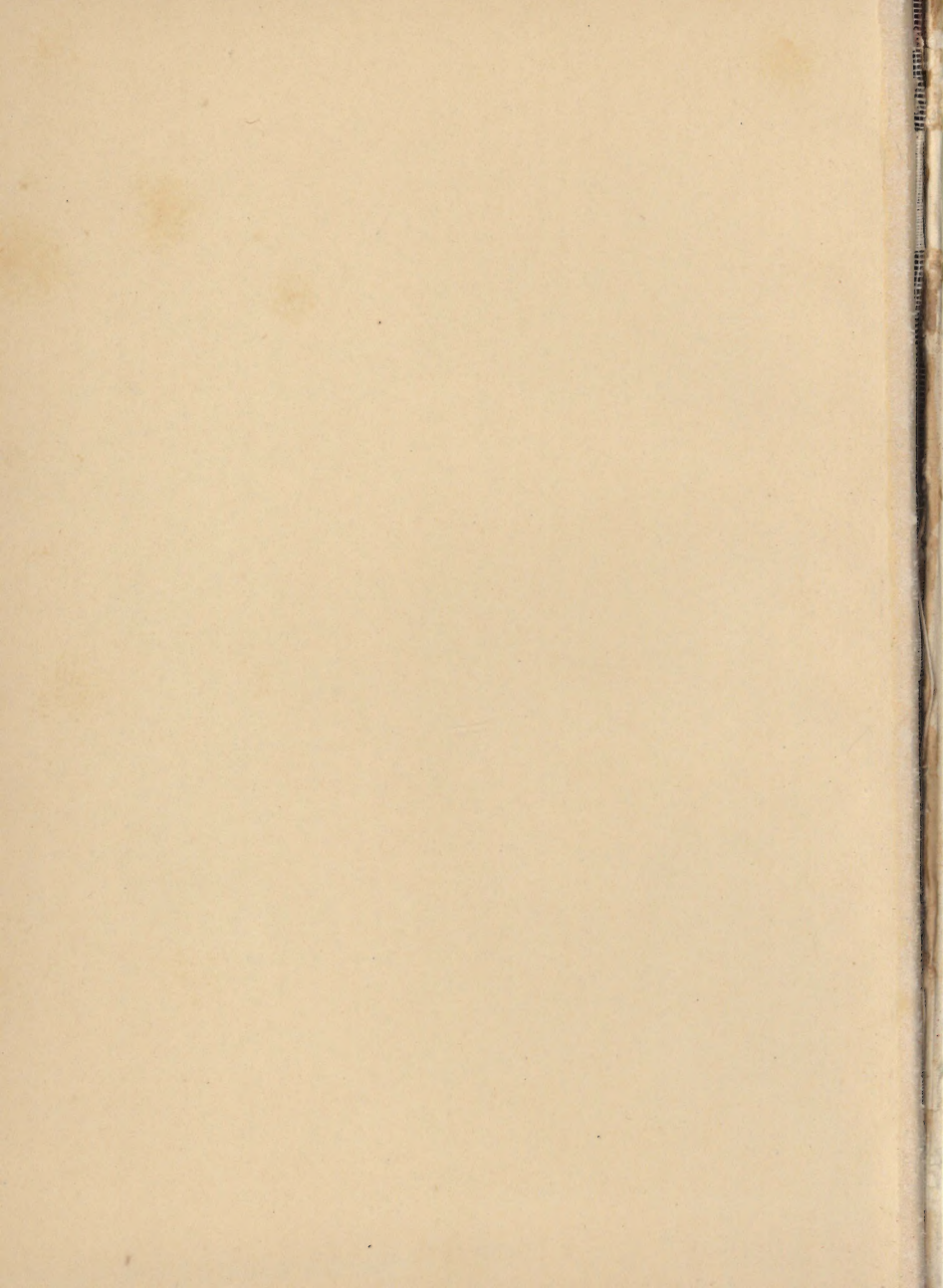
## **THE SMALLER BRITISH POSSESSIONS IN EUROPE AND ASIA.**



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SMALLER BRITISH POSSESSIONS.



CORBIÈRE ROCKS AND LIGHTHOUSE, JERSEY.

OUR EMPIRE'S WONDROUS STORY.

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Smaller  
British Possessions

(Europe and Asia).

By  
C. BERNARD RUTLEY  
and  
CECILY M. RUTLEY.

E. J. ARNOLD & SON, LTD., Educational Publishers,

LEEDS, GLASGOW & BELFAST.

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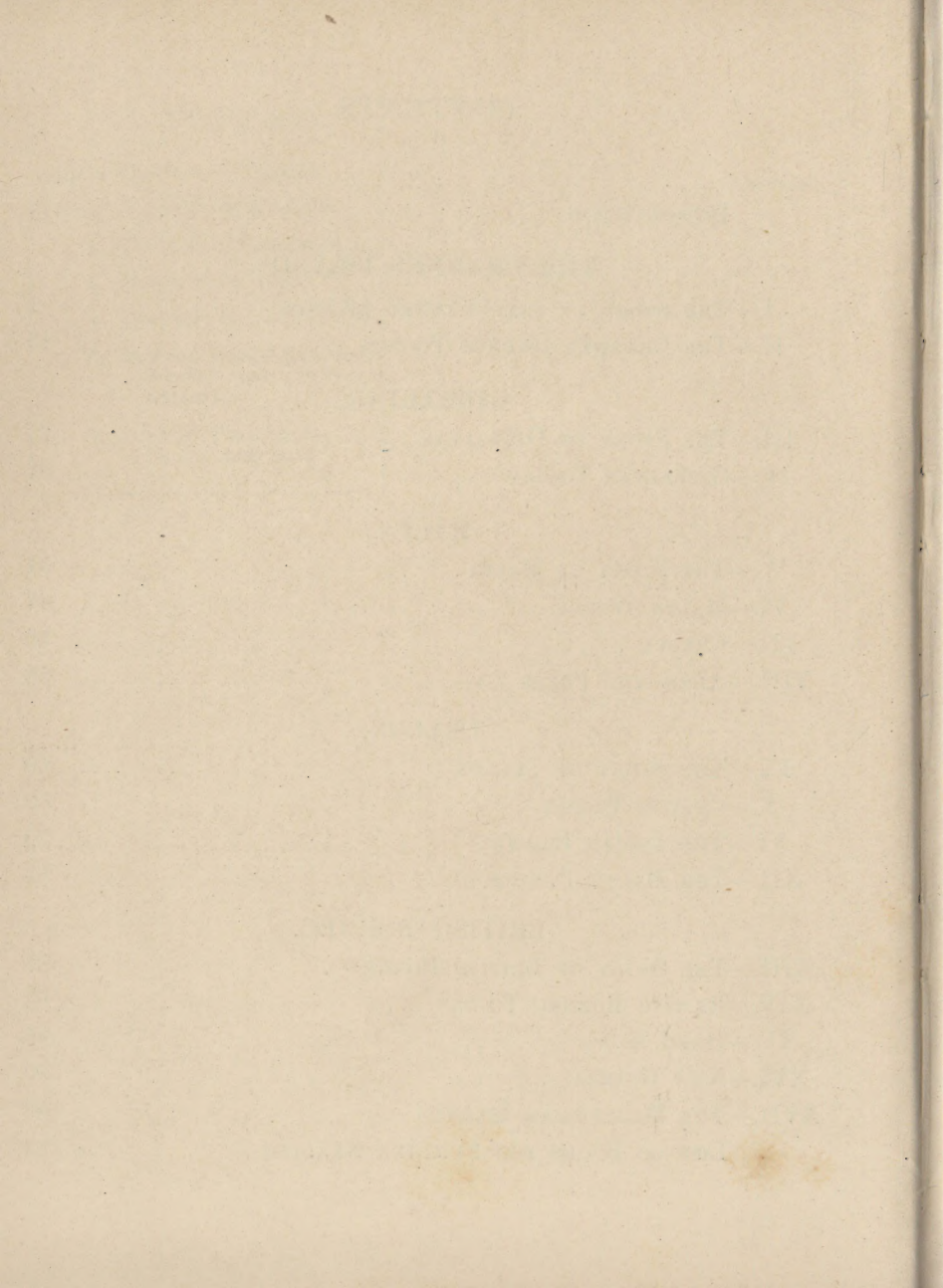
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INTRODUCTION.

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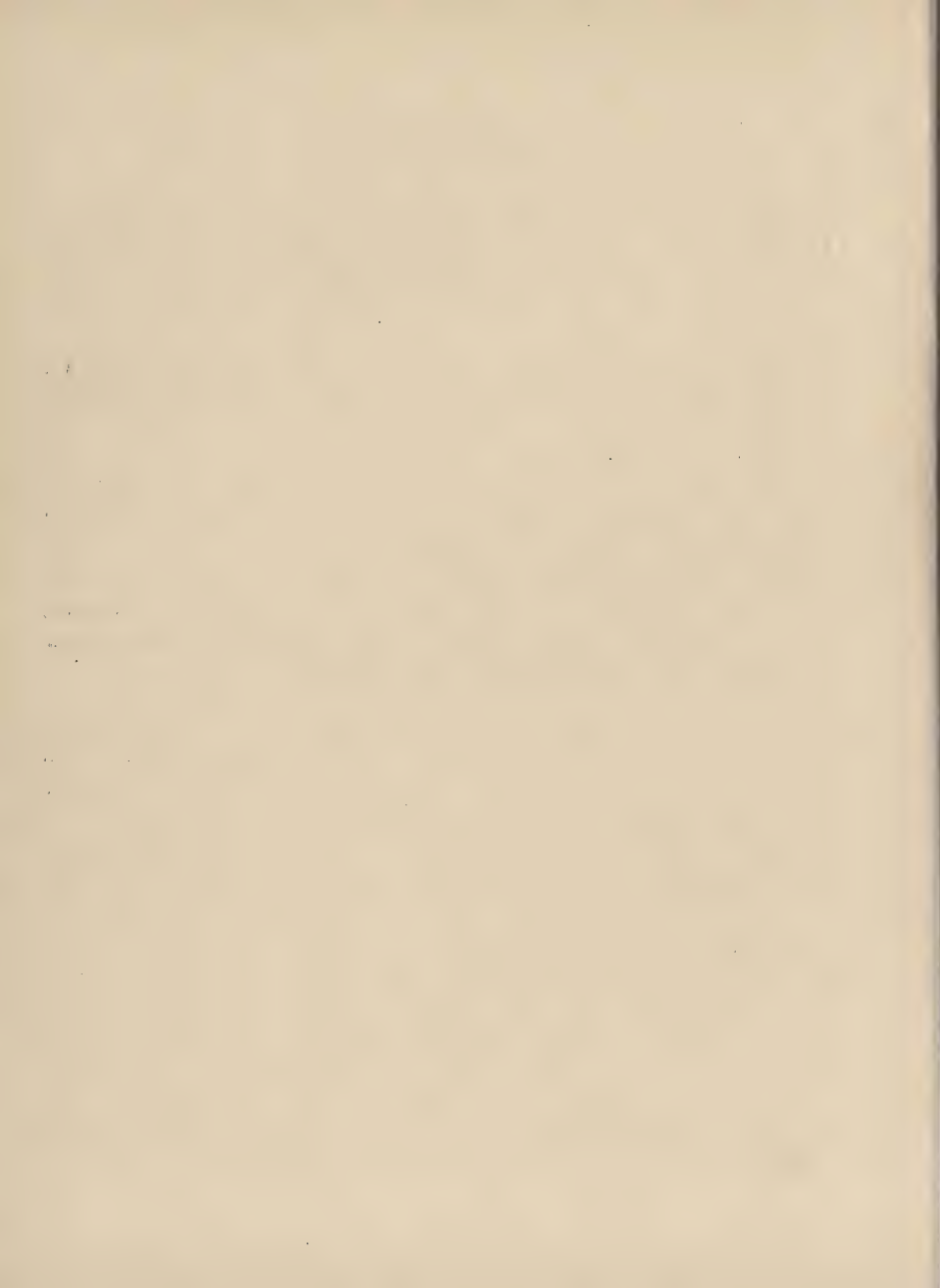
**I**N this book you will read about the smaller possessions of the British Empire in Europe and Asia. But you must not think that, because they are smaller, they must therefore be of little importance.

The greater the size of a colony, the more important it is, for some reasons—chiefly because it is able to support a larger number of people.

But the little islands scattered over the Mediterranean and the Far Eastern waters are also of great value to the Empire. Many of them guard the ocean routes leading to the larger territories. They also provide halting places where the ships, on their long journeys to and fro, can stop to take in fresh supplies of fuel and provisions, and, if need be, to repair. Many valuable productions, also, come to us from these smaller islands and oddments of land.

Great prowess was displayed, and many heroic deeds were performed, in the conquest and settlement of the larger colonies. Much patience and perseverance were practised in making them what they are to-day. But the prowess and heroism, the patience and perseverance, required and displayed in the acquisition, settlement, and development of the smaller lands, have often been just as great.

A true mother loves her smallest child as much as her biggest. So does Great Britain love and honour these smaller children of hers. She realizes their value in her vast Empire scheme. She gives them her devotion and gratitude for all they have done for her in the past, and will continue to do in the future, as the great British Empire becomes more and more the embodiment of the ideal of a true World Empire—an Empire built up on the only unshakeable and enduring foundations, those of freedom, justice, and brotherhood.



# OUR EMPIRE'S WONDROUS STORY.

## SMALLER BRITISH POSSESSIONS.

(EUROPE AND ASIA.)

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE STORY OF THE CHANNEL ISLANDS.

**I**N the English Channel, off the coast of Normandy, is a little group of islands, consisting of four larger ones, known as Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, and Sark, together with islets such as Herm and Jethou.

These are the Channel Islands, the oldest overseas part of the British Empire, and the only territory left to England of the wide domains brought to her by her Norman and early Plantagenet sovereigns.

The early history of the Channel Islands is lost in the dim past, but monuments and tombs of stone built by the ancient inhabitants are still to be found in different parts of the islands.

The Romans had dealings with the islanders, for Roman coins have been dug up. In 933 the islands



The Channel Islands.

became part of the Dukedom of Normandy ; and when Norman William invaded England in 1066, the Channel Islanders aided him in his conquest. As the property of the Dukes of Normandy, the islands thus also became part of the dominions of the Kings of England ; and when, in the reign of John, Normandy was lost to the English Crown, the Channel Islands still remained an English possession.

Not content, however, with the broad domains they had recovered from the English, the French also coveted the Channel Islands. Again and again they invaded the islands, but were always beaten off by the stout-hearted inhabitants. Even when the famous French leader, Du Guesclin, invaded Jersey in 1374 with some ten thousand men, the inhabitants, led by Sir Reginald de Carteret, defended themselves so stoutly in Mont Orgueil Castle that, after several fruitless attacks, the French were compelled to retire.

In 1460, however, a Norman knight, called Surdeval, obtained possession of Mont Orgueil by treachery, and for many years he and his men maintained themselves in the castle, defeating all attempts to drive them out. Then Edward IV. sent a fleet to recover Mont Orgueil, and for several months the castle was besieged, until at last the garrison were reduced to such sore straits that unless succour came from Normandy they would have to surrender.

But how were they to summon aid ? They had no boat in which to carry news of their peril to their friends on the mainland ; and if they attempted to build one,

the besiegers would hear the sounds of their hammers, and would realize at once what they were doing. In this dilemma the garrison decided to build two boats—one where the besiegers could not see it, and one in full view of their lines, so that they could watch its progress.



MOUNT ORGUEIL CASTLE, GONEY, JERSEY.

It was also arranged that the workmen on both boats should ply their hammers at the same time, so that the blows should sound as one. In this manner, by finishing the hidden boat before the boat in view of the besiegers was ready for sea, the garrison hoped to deceive their enemies, and also that some of them would be able to steal away from the island on a dark night, and fetch help.

It so happened, however, that a Jersey fisherman, a prisoner in the castle, discovered what was going on, and, having tied a message to an arrow, he shot it into the English camp, so warning them of the trick which was being practised upon them. The result was that the boat and its crew were captured whilst trying to escape from the island—a disaster which so disheartened the garrison that they soon afterwards surrendered.

The outbreak of the Civil War in England found the Channel Islands divided amongst themselves, Guernsey siding with the Parliament, whilst Jersey espoused the Royalist cause. Sir Philip de Carteret was Governor of Jersey at the time, and when he declared for the King, some personal enemies of his immediately threw in their lot with the Parliament, and in 1643 the Royalists were forced to take refuge in Elizabeth Castle and Mont Orgueil, where they were besieged by the Parliamentarians.

Sir Philip de Carteret died during the siege, and his nephew, Captain George Carteret, was sent to be Governor in his place. With the help of the islanders Captain Carteret soon dispersed the Parliamentarians, and relieved the besieged Royalists. He then fitted out a large number of ships as privateers, and sent them to sea to prey upon the rich merchant shipping of the Parliament, thereby causing heavy loss to the enemy, besides bringing a great store of much-needed wealth to the King's treasury.

So staunch was Jersey to the royal cause that in 1646 Charles I. sent the Prince of Wales to the island as

being the safest place for the heir to the throne, and there he lived until he joined his exiled mother in France.

It was in Jersey that Charles II. was proclaimed King on February 17th, 1649, and in September of the same year he paid a second visit to the island, where he was welcomed with passionate loyalty. Jersey, however, was to pay dearly for her staunchness to the Stuart cause. On October 20th, 1651, a fleet of eighty ships, flying the Parliament flag, appeared off the coast and landed a large body of troops, who immediately attacked the strong places in the island.

A seven days' siege brought about the surrender of St. Aubin's Fort and Mont Orgueil, but Sir George Carteret (as he now was) made a stouter defence in Elizabeth Castle. That castle, entirely surrounded by water at high tide, held out for eight long weeks against land and sea attacks; and when at last the garrison surrendered, they were allowed to march out with all the honours of war. Sir George Carteret joined the exiled King in France, and, bereft of her defenders, Royalist Jersey was ruled by the Parliamentarians until the Restoration, May 29th, 1660.

Meanwhile, affairs had been pursuing a different course in Guernsey. Charles I. had earned the hostility of the Guernseymen by various unjust acts, the chief being the destruction of their tobacco crops, which threatened to destroy the monopoly of the trade enjoyed by the plantations in Virginia. Thus it happened that when in March, 1643, orders came from the Parliament that Sir Peter Osborne, the Royal Governor, should be

put under arrest, and all fortresses seized and held for the Parliament, the inhabitants were quick to obey.

The Governor, however, received warning of what was about to take place, and, gathering about him a few loyal troops, he retired to Castle Cornet, where he was at once besieged by the islanders.

In those days Castle Cornet was surrounded by water except at the lowest tides, and, in spite of all their efforts, the Parliamentarians could not capture the fortress. Year after year the siege continued, and the garrison, blockaded by sea and with a vigilant enemy on land, were often on the brink of starvation, and were forced to eke out their tiny ration of food with limpets and other shellfish found on the rocks beneath the castle walls. Then, just as they were at their last gasp, a ship loaded with food, powder, and reinforcements would break through the blockade, and with fresh heart the Royalists would resume the defence.

Charles I. was taken and beheaded; yet still the garrison in Castle Cornet held out. With their great guns they pounded the town and the enemy's lines, whilst, on their side, they had to be constantly on the alert to ward off attacks.

So the weary siege dragged on for eight years and nine months, and then Cromwell sent Admiral Blake with a strong force to subdue Castle Cornet and the Royalist island of Jersey. Castle Cornet was now reduced to dire straits. No longer could food be smuggled in from Jersey, for Jersey was in the hands of the Parliament; and at last, on December 19th, 1651, the valiant

defenders were compelled to surrender, being the last Royalist force in the British Islands to lay down their arms.

With the Restoration, and the coming of Charles II. to the throne, a general pardon was granted to all the inhabitants of Guernsey who had sided with his foes, and for a hundred years the Channel Islands enjoyed comparative peace. Then, in 1778, war broke out between England and France, and the following year a French fleet under the Prince of Nassau appeared off the Bay of St. Ouen in Jersey, and attempted to land troops. The 78th Regiment, aided by the island militia, repulsed the invaders, however, and the arrival on the scene of a British fleet under Sir James Wallace completed their discomfiture.

But, the next year, a more formidable attempt was made by the French to capture Jersey. On December 26th, 1780, about two thousand French troops embarked at Granville, and sailed for St. Helier in Jersey. They had hardly set sail before a furious gale arose, and when at last, after ten days' buffeting, they reached Jersey on the evening of January 5th, the French commander could muster but twelve hundred men.

With these he landed on the island, and, covered by the darkness, the French marched to St. Helier, surprised the guard, killed a sentry, and occupied the town without a shot being fired. When the inhabitants awoke next morning, to their dismay they discovered that their town was in the hands of the French, and their Governor a prisoner,

Luckily there were resolute men upon the island, and as soon as Major Francis Peirson, who commanded the British troops, learned the true state of affairs, he called together his forces, and with the island militia marched against the French. The opposing forces met in the Royal Square of St. Helier, and almost at the first shot Major Peirson fell dead. For a moment his troops wavered ; then, burning with anger at the fall of their gallant leader, they charged the enemy, and after a fierce engagement the French were driven out of the town, their commander slain, and the Battle of Jersey won by the British forces.

Alderney, another member of this group of islands, has a story very similar to those of Jersey and Guernsey. Being nearer to France than the other islands, Alderney suffered more than they did from French invasions, and in 1558 the island was actually captured by a Captain Malesart and a band of Frenchmen.

The French, however, were not long allowed to enjoy their conquest. Admiral Clinton with an English fleet soon appeared upon the scene, and, with the aid of the Governor of Guernsey, Alderney was reconquered, and the French adventurers made prisoners.

In those troublous days the women of Alderney played as great a part in the defence of the island as the men ; indeed, it was part of their work to watch for the coming of the enemy, whilst their men laboured in the fields. In different parts of the island there were beacon towers and watch-houses, on the summits of which great bonfires, consisting of tar barrels heaped over with

fern and faggots, were stacked ; and, at the first sign of a hostile sail, the women in charge lighted the beacons, so that the alarm was flashed across the sea from island to island.

Once, so the story goes, a French battleship appeared off Alderney, and there was danger of the island being invaded. In this crisis the Governor bethought himself of the dress of the Alderney women, which consisted of a scarlet cloth petticoat and jacket, so that at a distance they had the appearance of red-coated soldiers. Calling out all the women, the Governor arranged them in lines along the cliffs in view of the French ship, and so impressed was the French commander with what he took to be a display of martial strength, that he sailed away without attempting to land.

In 1794 the French decided upon another attempt to conquer the Channel Islands, and this time Alderney was selected as the point of attack. The French force numbered over twenty thousand men ; but, ere they could embark, the English admiral intercepted a letter which gave details of the intended invasion, and accordingly the French had to relinquish their plans, not daring to put to sea in face of the English fleet.

Sark is the smallest of the four larger islands, and, like the rest of the group, has suffered much in the past from French invasions.

In the fourteenth century Sark was the special haunt of pirates and wreckers. These wretches set false lights upon their shores at night-time, so that passing ships, the crews of which thought them the lights of a harbour,

drove ashore on the cruel rocks, where the wreckers plundered them of all they contained.

As time went on, these wreckers brought destruction to so many ships that the merchants of Rye and Winchelsea fitted out a great vessel with the object of expelling the wreckers from their stronghold. It was one thing, however, to fit out a ship, and another to secure a footing upon the island, which is almost surrounded by precipitous cliffs, and where a landing was possible only on one small beach.

But, if the story is to be believed, the commander of the expedition was equal to the task. Arrived off Sark, he gave out that the captain of the ship had died, and sent ashore, asking that the crew might be allowed to bury the captain in hallowed ground, and offering in payment such goods as they had on board. This request the islanders granted, on condition that the burial party came ashore unarmed; and accordingly a coffin was lowered into a boat, and rowed towards the land.

There they found the inhabitants waiting to receive them, and whilst some conducted the burial party to the chapel, others of the islanders rowed out to the ship to receive the promised present. Arrived there, they were promptly seized and bound, whilst those who had accompanied the burial party received a similar rude surprise. For no sooner was the coffin placed upon the floor of the chapel than the English tore off the lid, and, seizing the swords which lay inside in place of the supposed body of the captain, they fell upon the islanders so fiercely that they soon yielded themselves prisoners.

After this Sark remained uninhabited until 1549, when a little force of French adventurers landed on the island and took possession. For nine years they lived undisturbed, and then a fleet of Flemish vessels surprised the French, and made a present of the island to Queen Mary. Queen Mary, however, appears not to have appreciated the gift, for it was not until Queen Elizabeth's reign that any real attempt was made to colonize Sark. Then forty families from Jersey and Guernsey were settled on the island, where their descendants have lived to this day.

The nineteenth century saw the end of the troublous period in the history of the Channel Islands, and their entry upon more peaceful times. For purposes of government, the islands are now divided into two divisions—Jersey, and the bailiwick of Guernsey, which, besides Guernsey, includes Alderney, Sark, Herm, and Jethou. Each division is governed by a Lieutenant-Governor, appointed by the British Government, and assisted by an assembly known as the "Deliberative States." These States manage the local administration of the islands, and no act of the British Parliament is considered binding until it has been approved by the Deliberative States as containing nothing contrary to the privileges of the people of the Channel Islands.

It will thus be seen that the Channel Islands enjoy a large measure of independence. In the Great War they contributed both men and money to the British cause, and, insular and tenacious of their privileges though they be, there is little doubt that the Channel

Islanders are very proud of their long association with the great Empire of which they are the oldest part.

### QUESTIONS.

1. Give the names of the Channel Islands.
2. How did the Civil War in England between King Charles I. and the Parliament affect (a) Jersey, (b) Guernsey?
3. What monarch was proclaimed King of England in Jersey?
4. Where are the following places :—Elizabeth Castle, Castle Cornet, St. Helier, Mont Orgueil?
5. In what way did a Governor of Alderney frustrate an invasion by the French?
6. Write a brief history of Sark.
7. Give a short account of the government of the Channel Islands.

### PEOPLE OF NOTE IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHANNEL ISLANDS.

SIR REGINALD DE CARTERET.

With a handful of islanders he defended Mont Orgueil Castle against Du Guesclin and a force of about ten thousand Frenchmen, and at last compelled the invaders to retire from Jersey.

SIR GEORGE CARTERET.

Drove the Parliamentarians out of Jersey, and held the island for the King from 1643 to 1651. He fitted out many privateers, which did good service to the Royalist cause.

SIR PETER OSBORNE.

Royalist Governor of Guernsey when the island declared for the Parliament. He, with a few troops loyal to King Charles, threw himself into Castle Cornet, where he commanded till 1646.

MAJOR FRANCIS PEIRSON.

Commander of the British troops who defeated the French when they tried to seize Jersey, in January, 1781. He was killed in action.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE CHANNEL ISLANDS TO-DAY.

The largest of the Channel Archipelago, as the Channel Islands are also called, is Jersey. But even this island is not very large, and you could soon walk across it in any direction, for it is only about twelve miles long, and seven wide. It is also the farthest distant from England, being but fifteen miles from the coast of France.

Around all the Channel Islands lie rocks of every imaginable shape and size, the best known off Jersey being those of the Corbière. At their seaward end stands La Corbière lighthouse, to warn passing ships of the danger that here lies in wait for them. It is a magnificent sight on a stormy day to watch the waves dashing up over the Corbière rocks, but it is very terrible, as many seafarers have found, for a ship to be driven against them on a winter's night. Beyond La Corbière, along the southern coast of Jersey, are many beautiful bays, where on calm days the water is of a lovely greenish-blue colour. At St. Aubin the out-going tide leaves behind it over four miles of rock-studded sand, which glistens in the sunshine with wonderful shades of purple, orange, and copper.

St. Helier, the capital of Jersey, has grown into quite a modern town. Its most interesting part is the Royal Square, where the Battle of Jersey was fought on January 6th, 1781. In the old, brown Norman church, with its low square tower, at the bottom of the Square,

is the tomb of the gallant British commander, Major Francis Peirson, who, only twenty-four years of age, fell at the moment of victory over the French invaders.

Inland, this part of Jersey is like a fairy island. Here, in the south, the land slopes gently upwards from the coast. There are wooded hills and winding valleys, down which numberless streams flow to the sea. There are country roads and lanes bordered by high, steep banks, on the tops of which grow hawthorn trees and furze bushes. The branches of the trees growing by the wayside often meet overhead, forming green and leafy archways across the roads and lanes beneath, which are also bordered by grass, and flowers and ferns. Amongst these hide the toads, for which Jersey is famous.

At every turn some fine view of sea or land is revealed, and even the houses add to the beauty of the scenery. Some are square and white, others—the older ones—are built of granite, with roofs either of thatch or of red tiles.

Between the roads and lanes are the potato fields, where large crops of the famous Jersey potatoes are grown, and in groves between the potato fields grows a special kind of cabbage, which, so the natives will tell you, really flourishes only on this island. Seen from a distance, these cabbage patches look rather like groves of small date palms, for the cabbages shoot up into long woody stalks to a height of from ten to fifteen feet. These stalks are often made into walking sticks, or used for palisades. A great deal of fruit, too, is grown in Jersey's mild climate, and there are many orchards.

Even oranges and figs will grow out of doors in the Channel Islands. The island also has its own special breed of Jersey cattle.

The north of Jersey is very different from the south. Here the land rises sheer up from the sea in the form of rugged cliffs, which are broken up into many lovely bays and inlets.

In Jersey, numerous fine and interesting old buildings, or their ruins, can still be seen. Chief amongst these are Elizabeth Castle, and the magnificent ruins of the castle of Mont Orgueil, of which the keep and one turret are almost as they were in olden times. The little Chapelle-ès-Pêcheurs,\* close to the sea at St. Brelade's, is so old that it has only loopholes for windows; it is said to be the oldest church in the Channel Islands, and to have been built long, long ago by St. Marcouf for the fishermen of Norman days. There are many fine old manor houses as well, surrounded by trees and high strong walls, with great halls, gatehouses, and other features of the homes that were built in far-off times.

Guernsey is only about half the size of Jersey. The southern coast is particularly beautiful, with its rocky headlands, lovely bays, and deep ravines, the sides of which, in spring and summer, are bright with flowers. Indeed, Guernsey has been called the "Flower Garden of the Channel," and is proud in the possession of a flower which grows upon none of the other islands. It is called the "Guernsey lily," and is of a bright, rose-red colour. It is believed that many years ago, a Dutch ship

\* (French) Fishermen's Chapel.

bringing a number of the bulbs to Holland from Japan, was wrecked off the coast of Guernsey, and that some of the bulbs were washed ashore, and took root in the sand, where they eventually bloomed. The Guernsey country-folk, however, have another tale to tell. *They* say that, long ago, a fairy man came to their island, and carried off a girl to be his bride in fairyland. As a reminder of his visit, he left behind this beautiful, scentless blossom, which glitters in the sunshine as though it were covered with fairy gold.

“One of the most beautiful sights in the whole Channel Archipelago,” says a vividly descriptive writer upon these islands, “is the view as you enter Guernsey Harbour on a brilliant summer morning. To the north stands on a slight eminence the old Vale Castle, guardian of the busy little port of St. Sampson. Sombre Castle Cornet, which seems to bar all approach, lies opposite the town, and in the quiet pool is gathered every variety of shipping—white yachts, black barges, cinnamon-sailed fishing boats, silhouetted against the tall irregular houses which line the quay. The town of St. Peter Port is built on the slope of a hill, with tier upon tier of tall red-roofed houses clustering down to the water’s edge. It is protected on the southern side by the green height on which Fort George is situated, and, behind that again, the rocky promontory of Jerbourg, beyond which, when veiled in the morning mists that make sea and sky seem one, the horizon melts away into a golden haze woven of cloud and sunshine.”\*

\* From *The Channel Islands*, by Edith F. Carey. Quoted by kind permission of the Publishers, Messrs. A. & C. Black, Ltd.

St. Peter Port is the capital of Guernsey, and is on the eastern coast. It is a picturesque old town, and its streets may be likened to long stairways which lead up and down the hill.



GUERNSEY HARBOUR AND ST. PETER PORT.

Unfortunately, Guernsey is not now so beautiful inland as it once was. No longer can one walk across it through long lanes and roads with flower-covered hedges on either side. These, and nearly all the trees, have been cut down to make room for the greenhouses where grapes, peaches, and other fruits are grown in great abundance, and for the little cottages where dwell the people who cultivate them.

Like Jersey, Guernsey has also its own special breed of cattle.

Alderney, the third island, is, on account of its position, now called "The Key of the Channel." It is much smaller than either Jersey or Guernsey, having an area of only four square miles. The northern and eastern parts consist of low, flat, sandy commons, while in the south-west there are green valleys sandwiched in between fertile uplands, with huge, granite cliffs bordering on the sea. The people grow grain and vegetables on the light fertile soil, and there is good pasture land for the Alderney cattle. Dangerous rocks and reefs surround the island, and on the Casquets—about seven miles to the west—many a ship has been wrecked. Countless sea-birds, wheeling overhead, add their plaintive cries to the sound of the waves rushing and seething over the rocks, and in the whirlpools below. Altogether, Alderney is wild and rugged, beautiful and untamed.

Wildest, loveliest, most difficult of access is Sark, the fourth island. Truly, as the poet Swinburne wrote, "Sark, fairer than aught in the world that the lit skies cover, Laughs inly behind her cliffs."

At first sight, this little island, which is only three miles long, and one and a half wide at its broadest part, appears to be literally surrounded by high, rock-bound cliffs, which rise, in most places, to a height of three hundred feet sheer above the level of the sea. Only at one spot is it really possible to land. This is at the tiny harbour of Le Creux on the eastern coast.

The island is divided into two parts of unequal size, known as Great Sark and Little Sark, which are connected by the Coupée. This little isthmus, "one sheer

thread of narrowing precipice," is so narrow at its summit that there is only room for a roadway, built up with a precipice falling away on either side. And it is so high that on a misty day, when the surrounding cliffs



A PORTION OF "LA COUPÉE," WHICH DIVIDES SARK  
FROM LITTLE SARK.

are blotted out, one has the sensation of being suspended in mid-air, with the roar of the sea ascending from far below.

Most of the people live on Great Sark, where are also the church and the manor house. In the spring-time the wooded valleys of Sark are simply covered with wild hyacinths and primroses, and other flowers grow right down to the edge of the sea. Round the

coast are many wonderful caves at the foot of the cliffs, and in them the seaweeds and sea-anemones are often as brilliant in their colourings as the flowers on the island itself. Rocks and rocky islets surround the coast, and on Bréchou Island, on the west, one house and a few fields are to be seen.

The inhabitants of Sark are engaged in agriculture and fishing.

Of the still smaller islands, Herm, not quite three miles from Guernsey, consists of four hundred acres of land. It is especially famous for its two shell beaches, formed entirely of small shells. Separated from it by a dangerous and narrow channel is Jethou. This little island is high, and surrounded by rocky cliffs covered with furze and bracken. It is only half a mile across, and has but three houses upon it, situated on the northern side. A yellow forget-me-not and a white pimpernel grow on this island, the latter being found upon none of the others. Off L'Erée Point, on the west coast of Guernsey, is Lihou, another tiny island. There is just one inhabited house upon it, and a great number of rabbits feed upon the coarse grass in the low-lying fields, or on the turf on the sandy banks near the flat shore. When the tide is out, you can walk from Guernsey to Lihou over a rough causeway, about half a mile long, which is then uncovered.

### QUESTIONS.

1. Describe the appearance of Jersey (a) around the coast, (b) inland. Which are the most dangerous rocks? Where are they situated?

2. Write an account of an imaginary visit to Guernsey.
3. Which of the Channel Islands is called "The Key of the Channel," and why? Write all you know about it.
4. Which are the smaller islands of the Channel Archipelago? Mention any interesting facts that you know about them.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE STORY OF GIBRALTAR.

Gibraltar, the solitary mass of rock commanding the western entrance to the Mediterranean, has been one of the most hotly contested spots on the surface of the earth. Again and again the nations have striven for its possession. Fifteen times has the Rock been besieged, and often has it changed hands in its long and eventful history.

To the ancient mariners of the Mediterranean the Rock marked the limit of navigation, and for a long time none dared to pass the straits into the unknown seas beyond.

Noted in the early annals of the great Rock is the year 711, when the Moors crossed from Africa and invaded Spain, establishing there a Moorish dominion which lasted for over seven hundred years. As a preliminary to this conquest, the Moors, under a leader named Tarik, captured and fortified the Rock. For nearly six hundred years Gibraltar remained in their possession, and then, in 1309, it was captured by a Spanish army for Ferdinand IV., King of Castile.

This was the first siege; and, having captured Gibraltar, King Ferdinand added to its fortifications, whilst he peopled it by the novel method of offering it as an asylum for thieves and murderers.

The second siege, in 1315, resulted in the defeat of the Moors. Eighteen years of peace followed, during which the Spaniards let the fortifications fall into disrepair, so that when in 1333 the Moors again attacked, they were more successful, and after a five months' siege the Rock once more passed into Moorish keeping.

On hearing of this disaster, Alfonso of Castile hastened with an army to recapture Gibraltar. For some weeks the siege was pressed with vigour; then, both armies being on the brink of starvation, a truce of four years was concluded between the Christians and the Moslems, by which Gibraltar remained in the possession of the Moors.

After this, the fourth siege, the Moors were left undisturbed until 1349, when Alfonso again laid siege to Gibraltar. This time, however, operations were brought to an untimely end by King Alfonso's death in the following year.

In 1411 the Moors fell out amongst themselves, and the sixth siege of Gibraltar resulted in the ownership passing from the King of Morocco to the King of Granada.

Next, the Spaniards made another attempt to recapture the Rock. In 1435 Don Henry de Guzman, enraged at the way the Moors from Gibraltar were perpetually ravaging his domains, collected an army,

and, embarking the soldiers on board some ships, set sail for the Rock.

Arrived there, the Spanish force attacked simultaneously at two points, De Guzman himself leading the assault against the Moorish city. Landing on a strip of sand, the Spaniards under De Guzman advanced to the attack, but were beaten back from the ramparts with great slaughter.

Now began a terrible scene. Crowded on a strip of sand, over which the rising tide was swiftly advancing, the Spaniards could neither go forward nor retreat. De Guzman and hundreds of his followers were drowned, whilst no sooner did news of this disaster reach the second attacking column than they fell back in disorder, and the survivors, embarking upon the fleet, abandoned the siege within a few hours of its commencement.

The eighth siege, in 1462, was attended with different results. The Spaniards captured the Rock, and Gibraltar passed for ever from Moslem keeping.

From 1462 to 1704 Gibraltar remained Spanish, though no less than three sieges took place during that period, two of them being the result of a quarrel between the Spanish Crown and the Spanish Dukes of Medina Sidonia.

The eleventh siege, in 1540, was a desperate attempt by the Moorish pirates of Algiers to recapture the Rock which had belonged to their ancestors. In a fleet of galleys bearing about two thousand soldiers they advanced to the attack. The Rock was ill-prepared for defence, the garrison was weak, the walls were undefended, and

at first the Moors carried all before them, compelling the little garrison and the surviving inhabitants to shut themselves up in the castle.

There they were besieged by the Moors, and, rendered desperate by the knowledge of the fate awaiting them if they were taken, they defended themselves so valiantly that at last the Moors raised the siege in despair, and, having plundered and destroyed the city, they sailed away in their galleys, leaving the Rock in Christian hands.

For over a hundred and sixty years the Spaniards retained peaceful possession of the Rock. Then in 1701 the War of the Spanish Succession broke out, in which England, Holland, Austria, Prussia, and the German Empire were allied against France and Spain. Three years later, on July 21st, 1704, a combined British and Dutch fleet, commanded by Sir George Rooke, appeared off Gibraltar, and summoned Don Diego de Salinas, the Spanish Governor, to surrender. Don Diego, however, answered the summons with a bold defiance, and, though the defences were miserably weak, and he could muster but five hundred men, he prepared to defend the fortress to the best of his powers.

Sir George Rooke lost no time in opening the attack. For six hours the fleet bombarded the defences. Fifteen thousand shot were thrown into the fortress, ruining the fortifications, dismounting the guns, and driving the defenders from the walls, so that when the British landed they were able to capture the chief defences with little loss. Thereupon, finding further resistance hopeless, Don Diego hoisted the white flag, and on July 24th,

1704, Sir George Rooke took possession of Gibraltar in the name of Queen Anne, and the British flag was hoisted over the Rock for the first time.

The twelfth siege was soon succeeded by the thirteenth. This opened early in October, 1704, when a combined French and Spanish army, numbering some twelve thousand men, with a French squadron of nineteen ships, laid siege to the Rock.

The enemy started operations by digging trenches and mounting batteries, the fire from which did considerable damage to the defences. The British garrison, however, defended their lines with vigour. Having dragged their guns up the heights of the Rock to positions whence they could fire down upon the trenches of the enemy, they harassed the besiegers to such effect that they made little progress; and when, on October 29th, Admiral Sir John Leake sailed into the bay, and destroyed a French squadron lying off the town, the besiegers despaired of capturing the fortress by ordinary means.

In this dilemma the enemy conceived the idea of carrying Gibraltar by a surprise attack.

A goatherd, a native of Gibraltar, had made known to the besieging general the existence of a narrow pathway up the precipitous eastern face of the Rock; and, on the night of October 31st, a force of five hundred men, led by the goatherd, set off on the perilous climb.



Admiral Sir George Rooke.

They reached the Signal Station soon after day-break, and there surprised and overcame the guard. So far all had gone well, but the further plans of the enemy miscarried. It had been arranged that as soon as the first party gained the summit of the Rock, fresh troops should be hurried to their aid. These never came, whilst there was also miscarriage of a general assault on the defences, which was to have been made with the object of occupying the attention of the garrison, during the time that the surprise party made good their position on the Rock.

Left thus alone, isolated upon the summit of the Rock, the little band defended themselves for a while against a regiment of grenadiers who were sent to dislodge them ; and it was only when their ammunition failed, and they had lost one hundred and sixty of their number, that they surrendered.

After this the siege dragged on with attack and counter-attack until April 18th, 1705, when, convinced of the impossibility of carrying the place by assault, the French and Spanish allies retired.

In 1726 the Spaniards again laid siege to Gibraltar, with no better success than before ; and after that the Rock was left undisturbed in British possession until 1779.

Britain and the United States were then at war, and, thinking the moment favourable to regain possession of Gibraltar, Spain opened hostilities, and in July, 1779, began the famous fifteenth siege, the last and most memorable in the stormy history of the Rock.

General George Augustus Eliott (afterwards Lord Heathfield) was in command of the Rock, and he had under him 5,382 officers and men. It soon became apparent that starvation was to be the enemy's chief weapon in reducing the garrison. Scores of warships cruised the waters round the Rock, cutting off supplies and reinforcements, so that by December the garrison was reduced to great distress for want of food.

The next month, however, January, 1780, brought timely relief. Having defeated a Spanish squadron under De Langara, Admiral Sir George Rodney reached Gibraltar with reinforcements and supplies. He was just in time. Had he not arrived when he did, starvation would have brought about the surrender of the fortress.

Having relieved the garrison, Rodney and his fleet sailed away to the West Indies, and the Spaniards resumed the blockade. In spite of their utmost efforts, however, the small British fleet attached to the fortress sometimes succeeded in bringing supplies into the harbour, and so the Spanish admiral in charge of the blockade decided to attempt the destruction of these ships.

The night of June 6th was chosen for the attempt. Under cover of the darkness seven fire-ships were sent into the harbour. The danger was great. The blazing vessels, drifting down upon the British ships, threatened to set them on fire ; and only the heroism of the British sailors who, putting off in small boats, threw grappling irons on board the fire-ships and towed them ashore, saved the fleet from destruction.

After this event the siege dragged wearily on without any marked activity on the part of the enemy, except that the blockade became stricter than ever. Food again began to run short, and then, on April 12th, 1781, Admiral Darby arrived with another relieving squadron.



The Spanish attempt to destroy the British Fleet at Gibraltar with fire-ships.

The arrival of this fleet was the signal for the batteries, which the Spaniards had been constructing for months past, to open fire, and the bombardment then begun continued without abatement until June 1st, when it slackened off considerably. During that period thousands of shot and shell were thrown into the fortress; yet, in spite of the intensity of the fire, little

real damage was done. The city was destroyed, but the defences suffered little, whilst the loss of life was small.

Slowly the summer passed, the Spaniards occupying their time in erecting great lines of fortifications right across the isthmus. Behind these they lay secure, never dreaming that the British would dare to attack them ; so when, on the night of November 26th–27th, some two thousand of the garrison suddenly flung themselves upon the Spanish works, they found them almost undefended.

The surprise was complete. The Spaniards gave way in all directions. The stupendous fortifications were levelled and set on fire, guns were spiked, magazines were exploded, and by five o'clock in the morning the British troops were back in the fortress, having destroyed the whole of the enemy's advance works.

The beginning of 1782 found the garrison in an excellent position. The spring passed uneventfully, and then, in July, came news that the French and Spanish generals were planning a grand attack. For this purpose the enemy prepared ten ships heavily armed, and protected by timbers seven feet thick, which, it was thought, would secure them from being damaged by the fire from the fortress.

On September 13th these ships took up a position half a gunshot from the walls of the fortress, and opened fire. At first they fulfilled all expectations. The British shot failed to penetrate the massive timbers, and the battering ships had matters all their own way until the British gunners began to use *red-hot* shot. This brought about a gradual reversal of affairs. Sinking into the

timbers of the ships the red-hot shot set them on fire, and by noon on the 14th the grand attack had come to an end with the destruction of every one of the battering vessels.

With the failure of the grand attack, the enemy gave up all hope of carrying the Rock by assault, and the arrival of Lord Howe on October 11th, with a powerful squadron laden with supplies, destroyed their last hopes of reducing the garrison by starvation.

The great siege came to an end on February 6th, 1783, and since then Gibraltar's story has been singularly peaceful and uneventful, considering its troubled past. The fortress is an important coaling station and naval base, and from its position at the entrance to the Mediterranean it keeps open our roadway to the east through the Suez Canal. It is ruled by a Governor appointed by the Crown, and a garrison of 3,500 men is maintained to man the vast network of defences with which the Rock is protected.

Let us hope, however, that these defences may never be needed, and that the great siege, 1779-1783, may continue to mark the end of Gibraltar's stormy history, and the beginning of its age of peace.

### QUESTIONS.

1. How did Gibraltar first come into British keeping?
2. Relate how, in the latter part of 1704, the Spaniards tried to capture the fortress by surprise.
3. Write a short account of the great siege.
4. Why is Gibraltar important to Great Britain?

## GIBRALTAR'S GREAT MEN.

SIR GEORGE ROOKE.

British Admiral. Captured Gibraltar from the Spaniards after a three days' siege in 1704, and hoisted the British flag over the Rock for the first time.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS ELIOTT.

British General. Commanded the garrison of the Rock during the great siege, 1779-1783. The title of Lord Heathfield, Baron of Gibraltar, was conferred upon him (Heathfield Park being his estate in East Sussex).

## CHAPTER IV.

## GIBRALTAR TO-DAY.

Gibraltar consists of two parts—the Rock, which faces the Mediterranean Sea and the coast of Morocco eight miles away, and the North Front, a low sandy plain by which it is joined to Spain. Between the farthermost limit of the British part, where our sentries are always on guard, and the place where the Spanish sentinels watch, the plain is known as the “Neutral Ground.”

The Rock is, of course, the most important part. It is two and three-quarter miles long, three-quarters wide, and nearly fourteen hundred feet high. When looked at from one direction, it closely resembles a lion in repose. Its appearance, as seen from the sea after passing through the Strait, has been vividly described by the great French writer, Théophile Gautier, in his book, *Voyage en Espagne*, about his travels in Spain. This was written over eighty years ago, but the des-

cription still holds good to-day. It was, of course, originally written in French, and the following is a translation.

“Just imagine an immense rock, or, rather a mountain, fifteen hundred feet high, rising suddenly and bluffly from the midst of the sea, and based on a tract of land so flat and low that one can hardly see it. Nothing prepares you for it, nothing accounts for its being there ; it is connected with no chain of mountains ; but it is, as it were, the corner of some planet broken off during a battle of the stars—a fragment of some broken world.

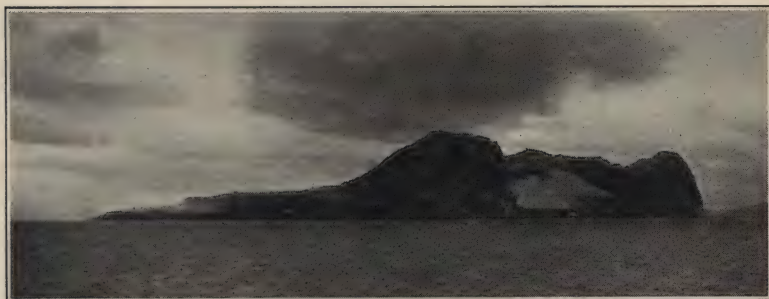
“What adds still more to the singular effect of this inexplicable rock, is its form. It looks like an enormous Sphinx, such as Titans might have sculptured, and beside which, the flat-nosed monsters of Carnac and Gizeh are but what a mouse is in comparison with an elephant. The outspread paws form what is called Europa Point ; the head is turned towards Africa, which it seems to regard with profound and dreamy attention.

“The shoulders, loins, and hind-quarters stretch towards Spain in beautifully undulating lines, like those of a lion in repose.

“The town is situated at the bottom of the rock, and is almost imperceptible, a miserable detail lost in the general mass. The ships at anchor in the bay look like toys—little miniature models of ships—and the smaller craft look like flies ; even the fortifications are not apparent. The mountain, however, is mined and excavated in every direction ; it is full of cannon,

howitzers, and mortars ; it is absolutely crammed with warlike stores.

“ But all this offers nothing to the eye, save a few almost imperceptible lines which it is difficult to distinguish from the wrinkles on the face of the rock, and a few holes through which pieces of artillery furtively



THE ROCK OF GIBRALTAR.

thrust their brazen mouths. In the Middle Ages, Gibraltar would have bristled with donjons, towers, turrets and ramparts ; instead of lying at the foot, the fortress would have scaled the mountain, and perched itself, like an eagle's nest, upon the sharpest crest. The present batteries are level with the sea, so narrow at this point, and make its passage almost impossible. Gibraltar was called by the Arabs, Giblaltah—that is to say, the *Mountain of the Entrance* ! and never was a name more appropriate.”

Remains of many of the fortifications of olden times are still to be seen on the Rock. Perhaps the most interesting are the ruins of the old Moorish castle

which was begun, A.D. 711, by the Arab chief, Tarik. The remains of its high thick walls, towers, and bastions give one a good idea of the impregnable fortress that it originally was. The Moorish Wall, once called "The Wall of the Arabs," was built by Tarik immediately after his conquest of the Rock in 711. A little to the south of this wall is the Wall of Charles the Fifth, built by order of the great Emperor as a protection against the attacks of the Turks, and finished in 1575. At the northern end of the Rock, high upon its crest, twelve hundred feet above the sea, stands the gun which became famous during the siege of 1779-83.

Nearly all the old buildings in the town of Gibraltar were destroyed during this siege, so that the town of to-day is comparatively modern. With its buildings crowded together at the north-western corner of the Rock, it can truly be described as being "almost imperceptible." Only a small part is built on level ground, and many of the streets are in the form of rough stairs or steps. It is interesting to visit the Moorish Market, where stately Moors, arrayed in robes of many different colours, sell their wares, chiefly eggs, fowls and basket-work. Many of the vendors wait for their customers, sitting sedately cross-legged by their stalls.

The city is divided into two parts, the North Town and the South, by the beautiful Alameda\* Gardens. The North Town is the more important and populous, but the South is more picturesque, and has many houses standing in lovely gardens. The inhabitants, with the

\* Spanish for "promenade."

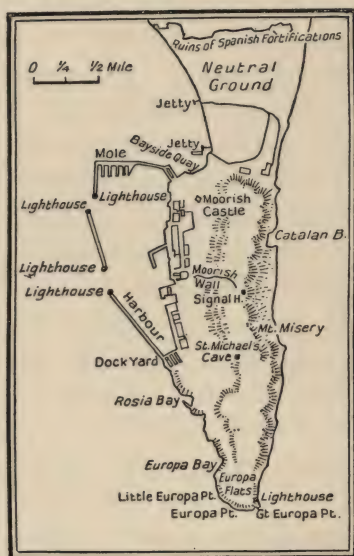
exception of the British garrison, are chiefly of Spanish and Italian descent.

In Gibraltar's wide harbour fifty ships can ride at anchor, and it is a great coaling port for passenger and cargo boats to and from the East.

On the eastern side of the Rock is the little village of Catalan Bay. Here the inhabitants are chiefly of German descent, and are mostly fishermen. This side of the Rock is very bleak during the winter; hence it is but thinly populated.

Gibraltar is quite a delightful place to visit between October and May. During this period the climate is generally as mild as that of one of our ordinary summer days. For the rest of the year it is rather hot, although a fresh breeze is always blowing in from the sea from forenoon until sunset, and the night that follows is much cooler than the day. The most unpleasant part about the season from June to September is the thick mass of clouds often hanging over the Rock for weeks at a time before it finally dissolves into rain.

In spite of the fact that Gibraltar is commonly known as "the Barren Rock," many beautiful trees and



Gibraltar.

flowers grow in its excellent climate. In early summer the eastern side of the Rock is bright with masses of the lilac-coloured Gibraltar candytuft, which grows profusely in the clefts between the rocks. Narcissi, red-hot poker plants, orange, lemon, and almond trees also add, in their turn, to the beauty of the scene, while prickly pears, palm, plane, yew, wild olive, pepper, locust, and other trees abound.

Long, long ago, when the Rock was covered with a dense forest, wolves, badgers, wild boars and porcupines were amongst the wild creatures that made it their home. To-day there are only suitable haunts for foxes, rabbits, hares, and apes. These last are found nowhere else in Europe in the wild state. It is popularly believed that they came originally from Barbary in Africa, through a natural tunnel running under the Straits, and opening into St. Michael's Cave in Gibraltar. There are not a great number of these apes upon the Rock, but those there are are very large and fat. Special precautions are taken to keep them from harm. They are often to be seen disporting themselves on the western side of the Rock, especially when the wind is blowing from the east, and when the nuts are ripe, they make expeditions down to the gardens of the houses along the roads below.

Two kinds of snakes, a black and a green, are common in the wooded parts of Gibraltar, and in the shrubberies, gardens, and caves—of which there are a great number round the Rock, some of them being especially large and fine. The snakes are sometimes as much as four or five feet in length, and it is not pleasant

to be bitten by one of them. For, although not poisonous, their bite causes a kind of nervous fever. Harmless and timid green lizards are to be seen everywhere, basking in the sunshine, or hiding in nooks and crannies of the Rock.

Eagles, vultures, and hawks make the Rock their hunting ground and home, and there are a great number of smaller singing birds, one of which closely resembles a blackbird. It is called "the Solitary One," as not many of its kind are found. The crested hoopoe is also seen upon the Rock. It is a rare and graceful bird, with a gay and varicoloured plumage and crest. These it can flatten down at will; and if it hears the cry of a hawk, it will lie flat down upon the ground in order to escape notice. It is about the size of a blackbird, and derives its name from its note.

### QUESTIONS.

1. Describe the appearance of the Rock of Gibraltar as seen from the sea.
2. What are the most interesting sights to be seen at Gibraltar, in connection with (a) the past, (b) the present day?
3. What plants, animals, and birds are found on the Rock?

## CHAPTER V.

### THE STORY OF MALTA.

The little island of Malta, lying in the Mediterranean midway between Gibraltar and Palestine, has a long and varied history.

Far back in the dim past a race came from Africa, and settled on the island. History does not record even

the name of this race; yet we know that they were mighty builders, for ruins of their great stone structures still remain.

Following the nameless race came the Phœnicians, who were the great sailors of the ancient world. From their famous cities of Tyre, Sidon, and Arvad in Syria, they sailed up the Mediterranean, and somewhere about the year 1500 B.C. they came to a small group of islands. The sailors were sea-weary, and their tiny ships were weather-worn, so that it was with great joy that they discovered a large natural harbour on the shores of the largest island. Into this harbour they sailed, and because they found safety therein, they called the island "Malet" or the Shelter.

After the Phœnicians came the Greeks, who named the island Melita, or the "Land of Honey," and who built a city of that name where Città Vecchia (that is, the old city) now stands. The Greeks were followed by the Carthaginians, who in turn were ousted by the Romans.

Under the Romans Malta flourished. Many fine buildings and palaces were built, and with its warm climate the island became a winter resort for the Roman nobility.

Then one day, in the second month of the year 58, an event occurred which has ever remained one of the most treasured memories of the Maltese. It was a stormy day, and the *gregale*\*—a cold wind from the north-east—was blowing with unusual fury, when some

\* Pronounce *gra-gâ'-lâ*—*a* as in "surface"; *â* as in "father"; *â* as in "mate." The word is a form of the Italian *grecale*, from *greco* (Greek).

Maltese saw a small ship being driven towards the shore in the present St. Paul's Bay.

The ship struck and broke in half, but all those on board, came safely ashore, clinging to broken masts



The Landing of the Phœnicians.

and fragments of the wreck. The Maltese received the shipwrecked mariners kindly, and kindled a fire for them ; but, as they were sitting round the blaze, warming themselves, a viper crawled forth from the burning pile, and bit the hand of one of the survivors.

The Maltese looked to see the man fall down dead, but, to their amazement and awe, he took no harm ; and when St. Paul—for he it was whom the snake had bitten—spoke to them of the Christian faith, the Maltese

are said to have been readily converted, Publius, "the chief man of the island,"\* being (according to tradition) consecrated the first Bishop of Malta by the Apostle.

Until 395 Malta formed part of the Roman Empire, and, on the division of territory which took place in that year it was allotted to the Eastern Empire, or Empire of Constantinople.

At length, in the year 870, the Arabs of Africa, filled with burning zeal for the religion of Mohammed, attacked the island in the course of their other conquests, slew the garrison, and placed Malta under the rule of an Arab emir.

The Arabs did not treat the Maltese kindly. It may be presumed that the conquerors strove to convert the inhabitants to Islam, for, according to tradition, they inflicted great sufferings upon the unhappy islanders. The Maltese remained true to their faith, however, worshipping in the catacombs under their cities, until, in the year 1090, Count Roger, the Norman, who then ruled over Sicily, came to Malta with a small force of men-at-arms, and drove the Arabs forth.

For the next four hundred years the Maltese acknowledged various European rulers as their lords. They obtained some degree of freedom, and even waged one or two small wars on their own account. Native chroniclers are fond of recounting how, in a fiercely contested naval battle, the Maltese fleet defeated and utterly destroyed the fleet of the republic of Pisa, whilst in a

similar engagement they defeated the Venetian fleet, and wrested from that powerful republic the island of Candia.

The year 1530 was one of the most momentous in the history of Malta. In that year the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, those doughty fighters whose one object in life was to wage relentless warfare against the Moslem enemies of the Christian faith, were driven from the island of Rhodes, which they had occupied for over two hundred years, by their hereditary enemies, the Turks ; and, seeking another place where they might maintain their order, they were granted the island of Malta by the Emperor Charles V.

Accordingly, they took possession of Malta, and fortified the island, for they knew that ere long the Turks would strive to turn them out of Malta, as they had expelled them from Rhodes.

For thirty-five years the Knights remained undisturbed in Malta, whilst their great galleys, rowed by Moslem slaves, swept the Mediterranean from end to end. Every ship that flew the crescent flag of Islam they regarded as their lawful prey, whilst they waged ceaseless warfare against their great enemies, the Barbary pirates, who occupied several strongholds on the North African coast.

In these days it is difficult to realize the bitterness of the enmity which prevailed between Christian Knight and Moslem Emir. Each to the other was an infidel—an enemy of the true faith. Each believed that, in slaying the other, he was pleasing God ; and both Christian

and Moslem felt assured that, if they fell in battle, fighting against the enemies of the true faith, they were assured of Heaven. They were both wrong, of course. They would have pleased God better, had they lived together in peace and harmony, each acknowledging the good in the other ; yet they were at least true to their beliefs, and thousands of brave men sacrificed everything, life itself, in what they felt to be the true service of God.

At last in the year 1565 came the time of crisis. The news reached Malta that Sultan Soliman of Constantinople was sending a great army of about thirty-eight thousand men to drive the Knights from Malta. To meet this great host, Jean Parisot de la Valette, Grand Master of the Knights, could muster but nine thousand men, drawn from every country in Christendom. La Valette himself, over seventy years of age, worked with the meanest of his followers in strengthening the fortifications ; and such was the spirit and courage of this great man that he inspired every one of his soldiers with a fervid enthusiasm and a resolve either to conquer or die.

It was upon May 18th that the Turkish fleet appeared off Malta, and the Moslems commenced operations by attacking from the land the small castle of St. Elmo, at the end of the promontory on which Valetta now stands.

St. Elmo was little prepared to withstand a siege. Beneath the bombardment of the Turkish artillery the walls began to crumble fast ; and, seeing how matters

stood, the commander, the Bailli of Negropont, dispatched an urgent appeal for reinforcements to La Valette, who, with the main body of the defenders, held the castle of Il Borgo on the opposite side of the Grand Harbour. Reinforcements were sent to him, the Grand Master exhorting the Knights and soldiers to defend St. Elmo to the last, and telling them that every day they held the Turks at bay was so much time gained to allow succour to reach them from Europe.

Nobly indeed did the defenders of St. Elmo fulfil the demands placed upon them. The Turks had thought to capture the castle within three or four days; yet, at the end of four weeks' fighting, it still held out. Their walls broken—exposed night and day to a ceaseless fire which sought out every corner of the defences—attacked again and again by overwhelming numbers of the enemy, the little garrison of Christian soldiers held grimly to their posts through the terrible heat of the summer days. On June 16th, indeed, they repulsed an assault with such awful slaughter that for a time the Turks refused to advance any more to the attack.

The end was near, however. The garrison of St. Elmo had done all that brave men could do, and on June 24th, surrounded by their foes and cut off from all possibility of succour from Il Borgo, the survivors prepared for their last stand. Those of the Knights who were too ill or too severely wounded to stand were carried to the breach and seated on chairs; and there, side by side, the wounded and the unwounded awaited the last assault.

For four hours it raged, a few against thousands, and when at last the hordes of the enemy swarmed through the breach, and planted the crescent banner upon the broken walls, not one of the defenders remained alive. For five weeks the gallant Knights and soldiers of St. John who garrisoned St. Elmo had held the enemy at bay, nor did they die in vain. But for their gallant defence of the fortress, the Turks would certainly have captured Malta.

St. Elmo captured, the Turks were free to turn their attentions to the vastly stronger fortress, Il Borgo. From June to September they battered at its walls, and twice they almost succeeded in storming their way through a breach, and were only finally driven off by the gallant defence of the Grand Master and his Knights. In September the long hoped-for relief arrived from Sicily, and, disheartened at their ill-success and the magnitude of their losses, the Turkish commanders sounded the retreat, and on September 8th the Turkish galleys, with the remnants of the great army on board, disappeared below the eastern horizon.

Throughout the siege the Maltese, both men and women, had displayed the greatest heroism. Il Borgo was renamed Vittoriosa, and the old grey tower, where La Valette kept watch throughout the long days of the siege, may still be seen, standing out above the modern city, a silent memorial of great deeds.

With the glorious defence of Malta the Knights of St. John reached their highest pitch of heroism. In 1571 the Battle of Lepanto, in which the Moslem navy

was finally destroyed as a seapower, removed all further danger of attack ; and as the years passed, the Order ceased to serve its purpose, and the Knights became corrupt and self-seeking.

The end came in 1798, when on June 6th Napoleon Bonaparte arrived off the island with a French fleet, and, having landed and captured Valetta, ordered the Knights to quit the island. In face of a superior force the Knights were compelled to obey, and, having left General Vaubois and a French army to occupy the island, Napoleon sailed away on his disastrous expedition to conquer Egypt.

The French garrison was not long left in peace. In September, pursuing their usual practice of robbing the vanquished, the French attempted to seize some valuable tapestries belonging to a Maltese church, an act which so angered the Maltese that they rose against the French garrison, and drove them within the walls of Valetta. The Maltese then called upon the British for help. Nelson appeared upon the scene, and, with the aid of Portuguese allies, blockaded the French in Valetta. In February, 1799, the British established a provisional government on the island, and, side by side, British, Portuguese, and Maltese laid siege to Valetta, which finally surrendered in September, 1800.

Thereupon the Maltese expressed a wish to be governed as a dependency of the British Crown. Admiral Sir Alexander Ball was appointed first Governor ; and though the Knights of St. John, backed by France and the King of Naples, claimed both Malta and its dependent

islands, Great Britain, at the wish of the population, retained possession of the islands, which were confirmed to her by the Treaty of Paris, 1814.

Under British rule the history of Malta has been one of peaceful progress. The Maltese have never been conquered by the British. They became part of the Empire of their own free will, and are amongst the most loyal of the King's subjects.

Malta's position in the midst of the Mediterranean is one of great strategic importance, and under the British the island has been converted into an important coaling station and naval base.

During the Great War the Maltese provided a garrison for their own island, besides doing good service in the Navy and on the eastern fronts. These services led to the grant of a form of self-government in 1921, by which the internal affairs of the island are conducted by an Upper and Lower House of Legislature.

Thus the great scheme of empire was extended to one of the smallest of the British dependencies. The great British Commonwealth of nations is bound together by no rigid despotism. The ties which connect the different countries are ties of race, mutual interests, and, in spite of many mistakes, a firm belief in the justice and destiny of Great Britain; and little Malta, in the midst of the Mediterranean, is by no means the least of the links in the great chain which holds our wide-spread Empire together.

## QUESTIONS.

1. Say what you know about the early inhabitants of Malta.
2. Who is said to have converted the Maltese to Christianity? Describe how he came to the island.
3. Write a short account of the famous siege of Malta by the Turks.
4. How did Malta become part of the British Empire?
5. What exactly is meant by the "scheme of empire" referred to in the foregoing chapter?

## PEOPLE OF NOTE IN THE HISTORY OF MALTA.

## PUBLIUS.

Referred to in *Acts* as "the chief man of the island," and, according to tradition, the first Bishop of Malta.

## JEAN PARISOT DE LA VALETTE.

Grand Master of the Knights of St. John during the siege of Malta by the Turks. It was chiefly due to the valiant example set by this great man that the Turks were defeated.

## ADMIRAL SIR ALEXANDER BALL.

In 1802, the first British Governor of Malta. He was greatly beloved by the Maltese for the manner in which he guarded their freedom and liberties in the critical years before Malta definitely became a British Crown Colony.

## CHAPTER VI.

## MALTA TO-DAY.

Malta, the largest of the Maltese Islands, lies about sixty miles to the south of Sicily, and guards the narrow passage of the Mediterranean between the latter island and Tunis on the coast of Africa. It has been called "the gate to Egypt," "the second of our stepping-stones to India," and "the key to our Empire in the East."

Its importance to the Empire is, in fact, out of all proportion to its size; for Malta is only about seventeen and a half miles long and eight and a half broad, or about three-fifths the size of the Isle of Wight, and appears merely as a dot on the map of Europe.



Malta.

The capital of Malta is Valetta. Here the Grand Harbour, a long, narrow arm of the sea, which runs inland for nearly two miles, is large enough to hold the whole of our Mediterranean Fleet, of which Malta is the headquarters. On the south-eastern

side are the great naval docks, refitting yards, magazines and stores, Malta being a military station as well.

To reach Valetta from the sea, we have to leave our steamer and get into a pretty little boat called a *dghaisa*, which is shaped like a gondola and brightly painted. If the day is hot, we sit beneath a brightly coloured awning with a tasselled fringe. Thus protected from the rays of the sun, which, in the Maltese summer, pour down very fiercely from a cloudless sky, we are rowed to land by two men, one of whom stands up in the middle of the *dghaisa*, while the other sits or stands in the prow. Each has a long oar, which he sweeps through the water with great grace, swiftness, and energy.

On landing from the *dghaisa*, we have to climb up one or another of the long flights of steps which lead up from the harbour to the city above. Each flight is in reality a street, and has well-built stone houses and

palaces on either side. Indeed, Valetta could truly be called a "City of Palaces," these fine buildings, with their projecting and beautifully carved balconies and windows having nearly all been built long ago by the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. On many of the flat roofs there are gardens, and in numbers of the courtyards which most of the houses possess, shrubs are growing. Inside, the most important rooms are large



VALETTA HARBOUR, MALTA.

and lofty, with brightly-coloured pictures painted on the walls and ceilings.

The steps and the streets above are generally thronged with people. The Maltese are rather a handsome race, with olive complexions, and the women have fine, jet-black hair, and dark, long-lashed eyes. The women and girls still wear the national article of dress called a *faldetta*. This is a large piece of usually black cloth or silk, which is gathered over the head in the form of a hood on a whalebone frame, and then falls down over the rest of the body like a cloak or shawl. It is not as heavy to wear as it looks, and in winter it keeps out the cold, in summer the heat.

Amongst the people move some of the famous Maltese goats, reddish or black in colour, and sometimes white. They are generally beardless, and often have no horns. There are no goats in the world hardier or tamer than these. They give such excellent milk that, to a large extent, they are used by the Maltese instead of cows. In order that the customers may receive their milk quite fresh, the goats are driven through the streets from house to house, and are milked at the doors.

Other quaint sights in Valetta are the watering carts, the same old-fashioned type as have been used for many years. Each is merely a barrel on wheels, with a pipe to which a hose is fitted, hanging out at the back. A rope is fastened to the pipe, and this is swung to and fro by a boy as the cart moves along the streets. Side by side with this survival of bygone days, electric trams, motor cars, and modern carriages and carts pass through the streets of Valetta.

If one wishes to get a general impression of the city in the shortest possible time, the best thing is to get into a *carrozza*. This is a quaint little carriage like a small victoria, with white holland curtains suspended round it from a kind of framework, which gives it something of the appearance of an old-fashioned four-poster bed on wheels! There are always plenty of *carrozzas* standing about waiting for passengers, and their sturdy little ponies draw them along at a remarkable speed.

The Maltese are a deeply religious race. Valetta

contains many beautiful churches ; and if it is a festival, or *festa* as it is called, the city will be more crowded than ever with its usual inhabitants and numbers of other people who have flocked in from the country districts outside to take part. It will be a gay and merry scene. All will be wearing their holiday clothes. Those women who can afford them will have put on *faldettas* of black silk, and every woman will have adorned herself with all the jewellery she possesses. Often this is a great deal, for Maltese women buy jewellery with the money they save, knowing that they will always be able to turn it into money again, should the need arise. On a *festa* the most beautiful brooches, bangles, and ear-rings will be worn. The peasants who have come in from the country wear a kind of long stocking bag, made of bright, striped material, hanging down gracefully over their left shoulders. It is called a *horja*, and contains their food for the day. When they return home in the evening, the *horjas* will carry anything they may have bought in the city.

A *festa* always begins with services in the churches, followed by a procession through the streets. The latter part of the day is given over to merrymaking. Numbers of booths are set up in the streets, or on the piazzas (i.e. squares) outside the churches, and here may be bought all sorts of marvellous pastries, sweets, and fruits. Boys move about amongst the crowds, and sell tumblerfuls of iced water from barrels slung across their shoulders. The height of the fun is reached in the evening when the people wander up and down the

streets, singing old Maltese airs and comic songs, and playing the accompaniments on guitars and concertinas.

From different parts of Valetta excellent views of the undulating country beyond may be obtained. There are numbers of villages on the island, many of them built upon the slopes of the hills. They are very picturesque with their white-walled houses, the doors and windows of which are painted a bright green. On the flat roof of each house there is almost certain to be a dog or a cat basking in the sunshine, and there may be a row of pumpkins and a clover rick as well. In both town and country flat roofs are very necessary, in order to catch the rain. For, as there are no rivers or streams in Malta on account of the light, porous limestone soil by which the rain is quickly absorbed, it is most essential that the rainfall of the autumn and winter—it never rains between May and September—should be carefully conserved. Pipes carry the rain from the roofs into wells in the courtyards or basements below.

The lightness of the soil also necessitates a special arrangement of the fields, which are built up in narrow terraces, one above the other, in order to obtain a sufficient depth of earth. In between the terraces there are high walls to prevent the soil from being blown away by the high winds, or washed away by the heavy rains. The climate in the winter is very mild, with plenty of bright sunshine and blue skies, and that is the best time of the year for a visit to Malta; for the summer is very warm and dry, and in August it is generally too hot to be at all enjoyable.

Such foodstuffs as wheat and barley, beans, onions, and potatoes, are grown by the Maltese peasants in their fields. Much fruit, too, is produced. The orange and lemon groves are very beautiful, both when the trees are in blossom, and later, when the fruit is ripe. There are many vineyards ; and figs, peaches, apricots, medlars, pomegranates, and prickly pears are also grown. You would, however, miss large trees like the oak, elm, and beech. It is impossible for them to grow in the thin, dry soil. But there are plenty of flowers ; indeed, they bloom all the year round.

One of the chief occupations of the people in the country districts is lace-making, and entire families are often engaged in this industry. The famous Maltese lace is made of black or white silk threads, and its characteristic designs are circles, wheel, and wheat-ears. It is made on pillows, both indoors and out ; and you will often come across a little party sitting by one of the walls that hold up their fields, and busily engaged with their pillows and bobbins. The dress of the women adds to the charm of the scene, for they generally wear brightly-coloured bodices and plaid skirts.

The native Maltese language is a very ancient speech—an Arabic dialect,\* with some mixture of Italian ; this is in every-day use among the peasantry and poorer classes generally. At school the boys and girls are taught English and Italian, these being the two languages which are spoken by the better educated Maltese.

\* Some consider it, however, to be a form of the ancient Phœnician language.

The second in size of the Maltese islands is Gozo, separated from Malta by a narrow strip of sea, which in winter is often too rough for crossing by the little two-decked steamer which plies between the two islands. In the middle of the channel is the Islet of Comino.

Migiarro is the port of Gozo, and a pretty sight in the harbour is the long line of Gozo boats, native vessels built on graceful lines and gaily painted. They are open boats with two masts. The inhabitants of Gozo journey in these to Malta, taking the produce of their fertile island—sugar canes, fruit, raw cotton, cheese, honey, and cut grass for fodder. In return the Maltese take furniture, agricultural implements, goats, and dairy produce across to Gozo.

This island has been called the "Scotland of Malta," for it is hilly, and has some fine rocky gorges. In the valleys grow corn, cotton, oranges, melons, and many other fruits, in addition to a great variety of flowers. But, even in the sheltered valleys, the fields need to be protected from the high winds by walls of rubble.

The inhabitants of Gozo are strong, thrifty, and industrious. Nearly every family owns its own house, and there are hardly any that can be called really poor. The villages are delightful places, and most of the houses have their own gardens, containing orange, lemon, apricot, cherry, and other fruit trees. The coast of this island is very rocky, with steep cliffs. In places they are very high, rising up almost perpendicularly from the sea. You may sometimes see the people fishing from the top of them, because they are too steep to climb down.

The capital of Gozo is Victoria, a very old town containing many of the battlemented walls and fortifications built in olden times as a protection against Turkish pirates and other enemies. On a summer's night, if you took a walk through the side streets, you would find numbers of the men and boys sleeping on mattresses on the footpaths, where they have come to escape from the almost unbearable heat of the old houses indoors.

### QUESTIONS.

1. Why is Malta of such importance to the British Empire? Give as many reasons as you can.
2. Write in the form of a story, an account of an imaginary visit to Valetta.
3. Give an account of what happens in Valetta on a *festa*.
4. What are the chief occupations of the Maltese? What are the chief productions of the island?
5. Why are there no rivers or streams in Malta? By what means is water obtained and preserved?
6. In what respects is Gozo similar to Malta, and in what is it different?

## CHAPTER VII.

### CYPRUS.

Cyprus, situated in the easternmost part of the Mediterranean, about midway between Asia Minor and Syria, is, next to Sicily and Sardinia, the largest island in that sea.

As long ago as 3000 B.C.—or even earlier—Cyprus is believed to have had a large and prosperous popula-

tion, its importance in those days being chiefly due to its large supplies of copper ; in fact, the word "copper" is derived from the name of the island. Centuries later, Cyprus passed in turn into the possession of the Assyrians, Persians, and Romans. At the division of the Roman Empire, towards the close of the fourth



Cyprus.

century, the island became part of the Eastern Empire, which was ruled from Constantinople. Twice it was for a time in the possession of the Saracens. Richard the Lion-heart, while on the Third Crusade, took the island from the

reigning prince, to punish him for having ill-treated some of the Crusaders, and sold it to the Knights Templars, who, in their turn, disposed of it to the titular King of Jerusalem.

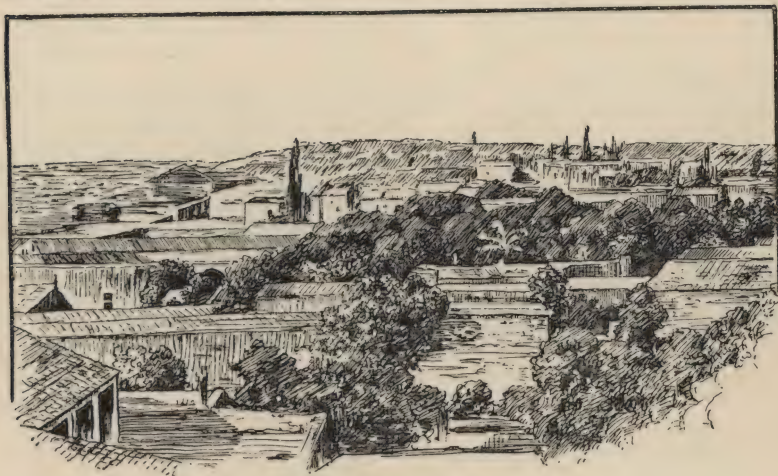
After other changes, it fell into the hands of Turkey. An army of 60,000 Turks attacked it in 1570, and the capital, Nicosia, was taken after a siege lasting forty-five days ; but the island was not finally conquered until the following year.

In 1878 an agreement was made between Great Britain and Turkey, whereby Cyprus, while remaining a dependency of the Ottoman Empire, was administered by Great Britain.

On the outbreak of war with Turkey, in the latter part of 1914, Cyprus was quietly but formally annexed

by Britain, and on May 1st, 1925, it was elevated to the rank of a colony, the High Commissioner being henceforth known as the Governor.

A great part of Cyprus is taken up by two mountain ranges, which run parallel to each other, roughly from



Limasol.

west to east. The lofty range which takes up most of the southern part of the island is known as Mount Olympus. Between the ranges is a broad plain on which stands the capital of the island, Nicosia. This plain, called the Mesaoria or Messarias, is watered by intermittent streams that flow down from the mountains. The ancient forests which once covered it were cut down, or otherwise destroyed, ages ago, with the result that the rainfall and the rivers have diminished. A great part of the plain is barren downland, but corn is largely

grown in the northern districts, and since the British have had entire control of the island, agriculture has made rapid advance. Trees have been freely planted, and great care is taken to protect them from fire, and, while they are young, from the ravages of goats.

In Cyprus the summers are long and dry, and the winters mild and rainy. Hence the olive, vine, mulberry, and other plants which can stand a long period of drought, flourish best. Silkworms are raised on the mulberry leaves, and silk cocoons, cotton, and fruits are exported from the ports of Larnaka and Limasol. Copper is still obtained from the mines once worked by the Phœnicians and Romans, and gypsum and asbestos are other mineral products. Near the ports are salt lakes, yielding a practically inexhaustible supply of salt.

### QUESTIONS.

1. Write a concise account of the history of Cyprus.
2. Describe the physical features of the island. What are its chief productions and industries?
3. Of what use and importance is Cyprus to the British Empire?

## CHAPTER VIII.

### ADEN AND PERIM.

Aden, at the southern entrance to the Red Sea, consists of a rocky, barren peninsula joined to Arabia, and a seaport with an excellent harbour. On account of its position, it is of great importance to the British Empire. It is one of the "stepping stones" on the

route to India and the East, and ocean liners and other ships call here to coal, and to take in and put down goods. The imports are, to a large extent, from Africa and Arabia; and a considerable part of the exports goes to the east coast of Africa. Politically, Aden is part of British India under the governor of Bombay.



STEAMER POINT—ADEN.

Perim, in the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, is a rocky island with a fair harbour. It is also useful as a coaling station, but its chief importance lies in its guardianship of the southern entrance to the Red Sea.

The Kuria Muria Islands, not far away in the Arabian Sea, also belong to the Empire, and the Bahrein Islands in the Persian Gulf are a British Protectorate. Both groups of islands are largely inhabited by Arabs and Persians, and by Indian merchants, and are chiefly important on account of their pearl fisheries.

#### QUESTIONS.

1. In what ways are (a) Aden, and (b) Perim, important to the British Empire? Find out anything more that you can about them.

2. What other "stepping stones" to the East do we possess?
3. What do you know about the Bahrein Islands and the Kuria Muria Islands?

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE STORY OF CEYLON.

To the extreme south of India, separated from the continent by a few miles of sea, lies the island of Ceylon, the land of the Cingalese.

Ceylon has a very ancient story. Long ages ago, before the dawn of history, it was peopled by a race of primitive hunters, of whom the wild Veddahs, who still inhabit the island's eastern jungles, are probably the last remains.

It is not until the year 543 B.C., however, that authentic history begins. In that year, a chieftain named Vijaya crossed over from India with a small army, and conquered the island. Vijaya was the first Cingalese King of Ceylon, and he introduced into the island an agricultural civilization, some customs of which still survive.

For the next two thousand years the history of Ceylon is one long story of invasion and conquest. Armies from India were repeatedly overrunning the island, and in 1408 an army actually came all the way from China, invaded Ceylon, carried off its King into captivity, and compelled the Cingalese to become tributary to the Chinese.

Then in 1505 began a new era in the story of Ceylon. The first Europeans came. They were Portuguese, under

a captain named Francisco d'Almeida ; but, though they landed in Ceylon, they did not stay. Twelve years passed before they returned. Then, in 1517, another captain of Portugal, Lopo Soarez d'Albergaria, appeared off Ceylon with a fleet of seventeen ships carrying about seven hundred soldiers, and proceeded to erect a fort at Colombo.

At that time a number of Arab merchants exercised great power in Ceylon, and, alarmed at the arrival of their ancient enemies, the Portuguese, they so worked upon the fears of the weak Cingalese King that the Portuguese soon found themselves besieged in their fort. For several months the siege lasted ; then help arrived from India, and, finding the white strangers too strong for him, the King of Ceylon submitted to acknowledge himself a vassal of Portugal, and agreed to pay an annual tribute of elephants, precious stones, and cinnamon.

Peace did not last long, however, and the war which soon broke out lasted almost without intermission for the whole of the next eighty-five years, during which the Portuguese were the only Europeans in Ceylon.

Then on May 30th, 1602, the Dutch Admiral Spilberg appeared upon the scene. At first the natives suspected the Dutchmen of being Portuguese in disguise, and were inclined to enmity, but when they discovered their mistake, their behaviour became much more friendly, and they willingly conducted Admiral Spilberg to the court of Wimala Dharma, King of Kandy. Wimala Dharma received the Admiral with much honour, and

an alliance was soon arranged between the King of Kandy and the Dutch, whereby both agreed to help the other against their common enemies, the Portuguese.

At first the alliance bore little fruit, and it was not until May, 1638, that the Dutch Admiral Westerwold arrived off Ceylon with a powerful fleet, which in two years reduced all the Portuguese forts on the eastern coast. So began another twenty years of warfare, at the end of which the Dutch had driven the Portuguese from the island, and made themselves the paramount European power in Ceylon.

The Dutch were much better colonists than the Portuguese. They made friends with the native rulers ; and, under their guidance, the natives began to enjoy a few of the benefits of civilization.

So passed one hundred years ; and then, in 1763, an English envoy arrived in Ceylon with proposals from the Governor of Madras for a treaty of friendship between the court of Kandy and Great Britain. King Kirti Sri appears to have given the embassy a friendly reception ; but no actual treaty was made, and it was not until the outbreak of war between Great Britain and Holland in 1795 that the British took active measures to occupy the island.

On August 1st, 1795, a British force, dispatched from Madras, under the command of Colonel James Stuart, invested the Dutch fort at Trincomalee, and captured it after a siege of three weeks. This first success to British arms was quickly followed by others, and when on February 16th, 1796, the Dutch garrison of

Colombo surrendered without striking a blow, the British had gained possession, either by force of arms or by treaty, of every fortified place on the island.

Ceylon having been conquered, the island was placed under the government of the Madras Council, which so mismanaged internal affairs that in 1797 the population rose in revolt. The insurgents occupied entrenched positions, and it was not until many severe engagements had taken place between the insurgents and the Madras sepoys that order was restored.

This outbreak and the misrule which had occasioned it, resulted in the government of Ceylon being taken from the Madras Council, and placed in the hands of the Hon. Frederick North (afterwards Earl of Guildford), who was appointed Governor by the Crown.

Mr. North unfortunately allowed himself to be entangled in some discreditable intrigues by the Adigar\* Pilámé Talawé, Prime Minister to the King of Kandy.

The old King had died in 1798, and his nephew, a boy of eighteen, had ascended the throne as King Wikrama Raja Singha. The Adigar now came to Mr. North, declaring his hatred for the young King, and proposing the boy's death or dethronement, and his own elevation to the throne. Instead of at once denouncing the Prime Minister's treasonable projects, Mr. North saw in the plan a means of establishing a British military protectorate over Kandy, and so far agreed to the Adigar's scheme that the King was to be reduced to a mere figurehead, and all power placed in the hands of the

A Cingalese title of honour.

traitorous Prime Minister. In return for British aid in carrying out his plans, the Adigar agreed, on his part, that a British force should be stationed in the Kandyan kingdom, and maintained out of the native revenue.



The King of Kandy receiving General MacDowall.

Having arranged matters so far, the Adigar departed for Kandy to obtain the King's permission for the entry of a British ambassador and his escort, in which guise General MacDowall and a force of eighteen hundred soldiers were to be introduced into the kingdom. Ignorant of what was intended, the King at first gave the required permission, and the British force was advancing to the frontier, when, taking sudden alarm, the King sent orders that they must proceed no farther.

General MacDowall was now forced to leave the bulk of his troops upon the frontier, whilst with the remainder he struggled forward through difficult mountain passes to Kandy, where he met with a very cold reception. The King definitely declined to allow a British force to be established in his kingdom, he declined to conclude a treaty with the British, and at length the General returned to Colombo, having failed utterly in his mission.

The evil results of this disgraceful intrigue between the British Governor and the Adigar soon began to show themselves. His first plan for gaining control of the government having failed, the Adigar now adopted another device. Acting secretly, he strove to provoke a quarrel between the Kandyanans and the British, and in 1802 he so far succeeded that a number of British subjects were forcibly robbed of their property by Kandyan soldiers.

This outrage led to war between the British on the coast and the Kingdom of Kandy, and in February, 1803, General MacDowall occupied the capital with three thousand men.

King Singha had fled and the native population evacuated the city before the arrival of the British, and one of the first acts of General MacDowall was to place another member of the royal family, called Mootoo Saamy, upon the throne. Mootoo Saamy was merely a puppet king. The real ruler was the perfidious Adigar, who had succeeded in keeping in the good graces of all parties, and now at last realized his ambitions. Having thus

placed a traitor in virtual control of the affairs of the Kandyan kingdom, General MacDowall returned to Colombo in April, 1803, leaving behind him in Kandy a British force of three hundred English and some seven hundred Malays.

As might have been expected of such a man as the Adigar, General MacDowall had no sooner left Kandy than the Adigar began to plot against the British, and on the morning of June 24th, 1803, the soldiers awoke to find themselves surrounded by thousands of armed and hostile natives. Reduced, as they already were, to a mere handful by fatigue and illness, the garrison defended themselves as best they could; but at last, when many of their number had been killed, they were persuaded to surrender, the Adigar promising to spare their lives and that of the new king, Mootoo Saamy.

That promise was never kept. Mootoo Saamy was seized by his enemies and promptly slain, and, a few days later, the English prisoners suffered the same fate at the hands of their cowardly captors.

Wikrama Raja Singha now returned from his exile, and, not content with the slaughter of the British garrison, he set to work to stir the whole island to revolt. So successful were his efforts, indeed, that, instead of punishing the King and the Adigar for their treachery, the British were hard put to it to defend themselves upon the coast.

About this time also hostilities were renewed between France and England, so that no troops could be spared for the conquest of the island, and it was not until 1815

that the final overthrow of Wikrama Raja Singha took place.

In 1814, driven to desperation by the cruelty of their King, the natives of Kandy rose in revolt, and when Wikrama Raja Singha seized a party of native merchants—British subjects—and cut off their ears, noses, and hands, the British Government was forced to intervene.

War was declared in January, 1815, and a few weeks later the savage king was a captive, and Kandy again in the possession of the British. So ended the reign of the last Cingalese King, and on March 2nd, 1815, the whole of Ceylon was declared a dominion of the British Crown.

Two years of peace followed, and then, in the autumn of 1817, the whole of the island population suddenly flamed into revolt, led by a number of lesser chieftains who had become dissatisfied with their position as subjects of Great Britain. Hostilities lasted ten months. The British soldiers had to force their way through dense forests, matted jungle, and over difficult mountain-passes, with a vigilant enemy ever ready to attack at the least expected moment. So grave indeed was the position of the British at one time, that there were thoughts of abandoning the interior, and simply holding on to the coast settlements. Then, just when the clouds seemed darkest, affairs began to mend. Tired of seeing their villages destroyed, and rendered destitute by the destruction of their herds and crops, the Kandians began to show signs of submission, and by the close of 1818 the rebellion had been crushed, and order restored.

So ended the last serious revolt in Ceylon. The Cingalese on the coasts had long realized the benefits of British rule, and the construction of roads through the dark, scarce penetrable jungles brought the natives of the interior into closer touch with their new rulers and the blessings of civilization, and removed the last danger of insurrection.



A Kandyan Chieftain.

Major Thomas Skinner will ever be remembered as the great road-maker of Ceylon. Appointed roadmaker in 1821, he constructed three thousand miles of road over hitherto impassable country, besides building innumerable bridges, so that when he at length retired from the post he had changed the face of the island.

Ceylon is a Crown Colony. It is controlled by a Governor appointed by the Crown, assisted by an Executive Council, which occupies to the Governor much the same position as the British Cabinet does to the Prime Minister, and a Legislative Council of forty-nine members, thirty-four of whom are elected by the population of the island. The Cingalese therefore enjoy a degree of self-government. They are prosperous and

contented, and whereas in the old days of the Kings of Kandy the great mass of the population was in a state of bondage to the Kandyan chiefs, the people of Ceylon now enjoy that freedom which the coming of the British has conferred upon so many subject races throughout the world.

### QUESTIONS.

1. Where is Ceylon ?
2. What European races occupied the island before the coming of the British ?
3. Write in your own words an account of the events which led to the British occupation of Kandy, the deposition of the Cingalese King, and the annexation of the whole of Ceylon to the British Crown.
4. What do you know of the work of Major Skinner in opening up the island ?
5. How is Ceylon governed ?

### PEOPLE OF NOTE IN THE HISTORY OF CEYLON.

FRANCISCO D'ALMEIDA.

A Portuguese sea-captain. Leader of the first Europeans to land upon Ceylon.

ADMIRAL SPILBERG.

A Dutch Admiral. The first of that nation to come to Ceylon. He entered into a treaty with the King of Kandy, agreeing to help him to drive out the Portuguese.

ADMIRAL WESTERWOLD.

A Dutch Admiral. Captured many forts from the Portuguese, and began the war which made the Dutch masters of the island.

COLONEL JAMES STUART.

Commander of the British forces which drove out the Dutch and conquered Ceylon for the British, 1795-1796.

## HON. FREDERICK NORTH.

First Governor of the Crown Colony of Ceylon, 1798-1805. Though he made many grave diplomatic errors, Mr. North did a great work in Ceylon by promoting religion, education, and commerce, by instituting courts of justice, and by encouraging native industry. Subsequently succeeded to the title of Earl of Guilford.

## MAJOR THOMAS SKINNER.

Held the offices of Commissioner of Public Works and Auditor-General of the colony. The great road-maker of Ceylon. Did more than any other man to open up the interior of the island.

## CHAPTER X.

## CEYLON TO-DAY.

“The Pearl Drop on the Brow of India” is the very beautiful name that the poets of the East have given to Ceylon.

“The first impression of Ceylon (from the sea) is of a land of intense green. The shore is lined by coconut palms, not standing in twos or threes, as in India, but in dense forests, many miles long, and some furlongs deep. Far inland the palms give way to other trees, for the coconut, they say, is only happy when within sound of the sea. All the far hills are covered so closely and so evenly with trees that, at a distance, the uplands look like grass downs; and it would seem as if one could walk smoothly over the dells and hillocks made by the topmost boughs.”\*

There is, indeed, a story told in Ceylon, that if a monkey travelled from Point Pedro, the most northerly point, to Dondra Head, the most southerly, it could

\* From *The Other Side of the Lantern*, by Sir Frederick Treves. Quoted by kind permission of the Publishers, Messrs. Cassell & Co., Ltd.

journey the entire three hundred miles without once coming to the ground !

The south-central part of the island is very mountainous, having over one hundred and sixty peaks, amongst which is the world-famous Adam's Peak. This is not the loftiest mountain in Ceylon, but it is visible miles out at sea, and pilgrims of many races and several different religions have visited it for a score of centuries. For, on the top of a great boulder on its summit, there is a hollow, five feet four inches long, and two feet six inches wide, resembling the shape of a gigantic human footprint. People of the Buddhist faith say it is the footprint of their great Teacher, the Buddha, and call it the *Sri Pada* (i.e. sacred footstep). The Hindus, however, declare it to be the footprint of their god, Siva. On the other hand, Mohammedans will tell you that Adam, after he had been driven from the Garden of Eden, had to stand on one foot on the top of the Peak for centuries, as a punishment. There are even some people—the Portuguese Christians—who believe it to be the footprint of St. Thomas, who, according to tradition, introduced Christianity into India.

The margin of the hollow is ornamented with gems, and a handsome canopy protects it from the weather. A little shrine has been built near the



Ceylon.

“footprint” by the Buddhists of a monastery half-way up the mountain; and here lives a Buddhist priest who receives the offerings, chiefly of flowers and money, brought by pilgrims of whatever faith. A bell hangs near the door; and, before making an offering, every pilgrim, whether man, woman, or child, strikes the bell. They believe that, by so doing, they attract the attention of the guardian spirit of the shrine, around which they walk, chanting prayers, and shouting the word “*Sadhu !*” which is an expression of joy.

Many rivers rise amongst the mountains of Ceylon, and flow out into the sea all round the island. In their courses are some magnificent waterfalls and foaming cataracts.

Ceylon is separated from India by the Gulf of Manaar, and by Palk’s Strait, a shallow passage of water which is only thirty miles wide. Accordingly, one would expect the island to be similar, in many respects, to that great country, of which, some time or another, it must have been a part. But its animals, plants, and people are so widely different that there can be little doubt that it has been an island for countless ages past. In India, for instance, are found numbers of tigers, hyenas, wolves, so-called “bisons,” and cheetahs; but there are none of these animals in Ceylon. Elephants are numerous, but they are quite different from those of India, having no tusks.

Ceylon also possesses, amongst other animals, a flying fox, and a small dangerous black bear, while panthers and jackals are common. There are five kinds

of monkeys in the forests, where also many birds of beautiful plumage fly about amongst the trees. In Ceylon may be seen lovely sun-birds, golden orioles, parroquets, and a variety of others. There are many different kinds of wading and water birds, including herons, storks, ibises, and flamingoes, as well as a number of smaller ones. Crocodiles abound in the rivers; there are some poisonous snakes, and a number of troublesome insects, the worst of which are white ants and mosquitoes.

Many valuable trees grow in the forests of Ceylon, ebony and satin-wood being perhaps the most important. Ebony is the core of a large tree formed of soft wood. Both these woods withstand the attacks of insects and of the weather for many years. To the natives of the island, however, the coco-nut palm, which grows abundantly along the entire sea-coast on the west and south, is the most valuable. They get food and drink from the fruit when green, and oil when it is ripe. From the nut-shells they make spoons, drinking vessels, and other useful articles, while the leaves they plait into plates and dishes, and into thatch for roofing. The dried leaves they use for torches, and the large leaf-stalks make good fences for their gardens. They also weave the fibrous casing of the fruit into matting, ropes, and nets; in addition, they hollow out the trunks of the trees to make canoes, and saw them up for knife-handles, door-posts, and a variety of other things.

Ceylon is not quite as large as Ireland, and its population is about four and a half millions. There are two chief native races—the Singhalese and the Tamils.

The Singhalese live in the south-western and southern parts of the island. They are by far the more numerous of the two races, and claim their descent from the followers of the chieftain, Vijaya, who conquered Ceylon in 543 B.C.

The name "Singhalese" comes from the word *singha*, "a lion," but the men have by no means a lion-like appearance. They wear long garments called *comboys*, which look rather like petticoats, and reach nearly to their feet; and they have long hair, which is sometimes allowed to flow loosely over their shoulders, but is generally twisted up into a knot at the back, and has one or more tortoiseshell combs stuck into it. The Singhalese women wear a cloth wound tightly round their bodies, and a loose jacket with tight sleeves puffed out at the shoulders. Their jewellery consists of hair-pins and necklaces of gold and silver.

The Singhalese, living in the interior of Ceylon, are chiefly engaged in cultivating rice and coco-nuts. They also work as hired labourers on the tea and other estates. Those who live along the coast are chiefly traders and craftsmen, excelling especially in carpentry and wood-carving. The religion of the Singhalese is Buddhism.

The Tamils inhabit the northern and eastern parts of Ceylon. Their skins are of a darker brown than those of the Singhalese, and they are a rather fine-looking race of people. Tamil men shave their heads, except for a long scalp-lock. This they tie up into a knot, and wear at the back of the head, if they are married; in

the case of bachelors, it is worn over one ear. The women usually dress in bright colours, and wear rings through their noses and round their toes, while bangles and anklets adorn their arms and ankles.

The Tamils are chiefly engaged in rice cultivation. Numbers are employed in the growing of tobacco; many others also work as clerks in Government offices, and in the employ of merchants and planters. Their religion is known as Hinduism.

There is yet another race of people in the towns. They are called "Moormen," and are no doubt descended from Arab traders who settled in Ceylon several centuries



A Tamil Lady of Ceylon.

ago. They are a fine race, and make excellent tradesmen, jewellers, and masons. The "Moormen" shave their heads, and cover them with one of two kinds of hats; their headgear may be either a rimless hat, shaped like a great thimble, and made of coloured plait, or a skull-cap of white cloth which fits tightly on to the head. The women, who often cover up their faces when they walk through the streets, love to wear half a dozen ear-rings of silver filigree in each ear. These "Moor"

people are Mohammedans, as one would expect from their descent.

There are Malays, too, descendants of the men who were brought as soldiers from the Straits Settlements at the beginning of the British occupation of Ceylon. Some of the inhabitants are descended from the Dutch and Portuguese, and, of course, the population includes a certain number of British people.

Most of the natives of Ceylon live in very primitive homes, which are, in fact, nothing more than mud-walled huts without windows, the roofs being thatched with plaited leaves of the coco-nut palm, or with straw. The best part of each hut is really its garden, where coco-nut palms, coffee-bushes, custard-apple, pineapple, and other fruit trees are grown. These gardens give the villages a rather pleasing effect. The chief food of the villagers is cultivated in the neighbouring rice-fields; they eat the rice with different kinds of hot curries, of which they are very fond.

The capital of Ceylon is Colombo. Its fine, artificial harbour is generally full of ships from all parts of the world—mail and cargo steamers discharging and taking in passengers and goods, and also strange-shaped sailing vessels from Eastern lands. Indeed, Colombo is sometimes called the “Halfway House of the East.” The most interesting part of the town to Europeans is, perhaps, the native quarter. Here throng men and women from many different countries of the East, from Persia, Arabia, Afghanistan, and Central India, as well as the different native races of Ceylon. Small native shops line the

streets, and here may be bought all the things that a native needs for his food, clothing, and household use. Amongst the fruits on sale may be mentioned "jack," which is very much like breadfruit, but larger, weighing thirty, forty, or even fifty pounds.



A SCENE ON THE ROAD TO POINT-DE-GALLE FROM COLOMBO, CEYLON.

All sorts of curious vehicles are also to be seen in the streets of Colombo. Great two-wheeled carts called *bandies*, drawn by a pair of bullocks, are used for the transport of goods—rice, tea, coco-nut fibre, and so on. They are covered over with hoods made of coco-nut leaf. For passengers there are light carts drawn by one bullock of a smaller and swifter kind than those used in the *bandies*. Each cart can carry two passengers. There are also jinrickshas, the use of which has been introduced from Japan.

In the middle of Colombo there is a large freshwater

lake, bordered with palm trees. Here the natives bathe, the bullocks are washed, and the *dhobies* or washermen wash clothes by folding them up into a truncheon-like shape, and beating them on flat stones, stopping now and again to dip them in the water. Naturally the clothes



THE OLD PALACE AT KANDY, WHERE THE KANDYAN KINGS LIVED.  
IT IS NOW THE RESIDENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT AGENT,  
CENTRAL PROVINCE, CEYLON.

suffer ! But they are washed to a spotless white, although no soap is ever used.

Many of the houses occupied by European residents are very fine, standing in the midst of large gardens or "compounds," full of all kinds of tropical plants and trees. Amongst the gorgeous colours chiefly noticeable

are the brilliant red and yellow flowers of the flame-trees, and the purple of the bougainvillæa creepers.

### QUESTIONS.

1. What beautiful name have the Eastern poets given to Ceylon? Give your reasons for thinking it suitable. Could you think of a better name?

2. What is the appearance of Ceylon as seen from the sea? (If you can obtain the book, you should read more about this island in *The Other Side of the Lantern*.)

3. Where and what is Adam's Peak? For what is it famous?

4. What reasons are there for believing that Ceylon has been an island for ages?

5. Write all you know about the animal, bird, and plant life of Ceylon. What trees are found there? Which tree is most valuable to the natives, and why?

6. What different native races inhabit Ceylon? Write all you know about them.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE INDIAN ISLANDS.

In Indian waters there are several groups of small islands which belong to the British Empire.

The LACCADIVES, off the coast of Malabar, in the Indian Ocean, are coral atolls. They were given their name, which means "the hundred thousand isles," by the people of the Malabar coast, who probably also included with them the Malabar Islands, farther south. The Portuguese discovered the Laccadives in 1498, and built a number of forts on them. In the following century the natives rose against their oppressors. The islands came under British jurisdiction in 1877.

Only eight of the Laccadive Islands are inhabited. Of these none is over a mile in breadth, and all the islands lie so low in the water that they would hardly be noticeable, were it not for the thick groves of coco-nuts with which they are covered. The natives are Moplas, that is to say, of mixed Hindu and Arab descent, and are Mohammedans. Many of the men can read and write. The women are chiefly engaged in the manufacture of coir, the coco-nut fibre from which cordage is made, and the men in the building of boats.

The MALDIVES farther south in the Indian Ocean, were also formed by coral polyps. In the sixteenth century the Portuguese made many attempts to occupy them, and the islands also suffered from frequent attacks by the Mopla pirates of the Malabar coast. At last the Maldivians sent tokens of homage to Ceylon, and claimed protection from the rulers of that island, with which they have been associated practically ever since 1645. The hereditary sultan of the Maldives, who lives on Malé, the chief island of the Archipelago, is now tributary to the British Government.

About three hundred of the Maldive Islands are inhabited by a population of 30,000, all of whom are Mohammedans. The chief exports are coco-nuts, copra (the dried kernel of the coco-nut from which coco-nut oil is obtained), tortoise-shell, bonito fish, coir, and cowries. As they lie so near the Equator, the Maldives possess a climate which is unhealthy for Europeans.

The CHAGOS ISLANDS, in the Indian Ocean, are sometimes called the Oil Islands on account of the

production of coco-nut oil, which is their chief industry. The most important island is Diego Garcia. It possesses one of the finest natural harbours in the world, formed by a lagoon enclosed by two coral barriers, and the largest ships can enter. It therefore forms an important coaling station on the sea route from Mauritius to Colombo. Most of the inhabitants of the Chagos Islands, numbering about seven hundred, live on Diego Garcia.

The ANDAMANS, in the Bay of Bengal, comprise about 204 islands of various sizes. The most important part of this group consists of five islands, which lie so close to one another that they are collectively known as the Great Andaman. Their individual names are North Andaman, Middle Andaman, South Andaman, Baratang and Rutland Island. These islands consist of a mass of hills with narrow valleys between, the whole covered with a dense tropical jungle. There are no rivers and few perennial streams, but the scenery is exceedingly beautiful, and the beds of coral in the secluded bays add a touch of exquisite colouring to the coast.



A Maldivian Woman.

There are many good harbours in the Andamans, the chief being Port Blair in South Andaman. Port Blair is used by the Indian Government as a penal settlement. An important meteorological station is

established here, from which information is dispatched to ships regarding the weather, especially storms, that may be expected in this part of the Indian Ocean. For although the Andamans are themselves rarely affected by a cyclone, they feel the influence of almost every one that occurs in the Bay of Bengal. The station is also able to predict the weather in the north and east of India, which is of inestimable value to those connected with the control of the crops dependent on the rain.

There is a section of the Forest Department of India in the Andamans, in which islands many useful and valuable trees abound. The chief is padouk, which is used for buildings, boats, furniture, and other purposes, and is largely exported to Europe.

The natives, or Andamanese, are a very primitive black negro race.

The NICOBARS, farther south, consist of twelve inhabited and seven uninhabited islands. The natives, or Nicobarese, are a Far Eastern race with the characteristics of the less civilized tribes of the Malay Peninsula. The chief exports are coco-nuts.

### QUESTIONS.

1. Write all you know about the Laccadive Islands, their history, and the life of the natives to-day.
2. Give some account of the Maldives.
3. What is the chief industry of the Chagos Islands? Which is the most important island in this group, and why?
4. Name the five chief islands of the Andamans. By what collective name are they known? Write anything you know about them.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE MALAY PENINSULA.

The southern end of the Malay Peninsula, a continuation of Burma, forms part of the British Empire in the Far East. On the west coast is the Crown Colony known as the Straits Settlements.

This name was given to the colony because it started from the two islands of Singapore and Penang, at the southern and northern ends respectively of the Malacca Straits. Singapore is the more important. It consists of an island and a town of the same name, which comes from the Malay word *Singapura*, meaning "The City of the Lion." It is a remarkably suitable name. Singapore is, indeed, like a British lion in the East. Situated midway between India and China, and guarding the narrow entrance from the Malacca Straits into the Java Sea, which is the great shipping route between Europe, the Far East, and Australia, it is of great importance as a commercial centre, a port, and a naval base. Here, to-day, meet all the routes, and all the many races of the Eastern seas.

In 1819 the island of Singapore passed into the possession of the East India Company, the Sultan of Johore, to whom it originally belonged, having been



Singapore.

persuaded by Sir Stamford Raffles to give it up. In 1826, when the Colony of the Straits Settlements was established, Singapore was incorporated as a part of it. The chief residence of the Governor of the Colony is in Singapore town.



SINGAPORE—MANY OF THE INHABITANTS LIVE IN THE BARGES  
WHICH LINE THE HARBOUR.

The jungle with which the island was formerly covered has now been mostly cleared away, and in the hot, damp climate, vegetables, indigo, and other tropical products are largely grown, chiefly by Chinese. The population of the island, which originally consisted merely of a few fisherfolk, now runs into thousands, including Europeans, Chinese, Indians, and people of other

nationalities. Singapore possesses a fine dockyard, and is a coaling station for ships.

Penang was obtained by the East India Company in 1786 from the Rajah of Kedah, and for a time it was the only British Possession in Further India. It became a Crown Colony in 1867. It is a very beautiful island, and, on account of its hills, it is a valuable health resort for people residing in the tropics. Its name means "betel nut," betel nuts and spices being the chief exports. It possesses a good and sheltered harbour.

The Wellesley Province on the mainland, opposite Penang harbour, is included in the territory of Penang. It was procured by the British as a protection for the harbour.

It is, for the most part, a fertile plain, and is inhabited chiefly by Malays.

The Dindings, consisting of some islands near the



A NATIVE OF THE MALAY STATES  
TAPPING A RUBBER TREE.

Perak River, and a small area of land on the adjoining mainland, are not of much importance.

Malacca is the name of the town and territory on the western part of the peninsula. The territory skirts the rocky coast for about forty miles, and extends inland for about twenty-five. Rubber is the most important product of this territory. Rice and tapioca are grown in the valleys, and gold and tin are found amongst the hills. It was a very important trading centre before Singapore absorbed its trade.

The COCOS ISLANDS, also called Keeling Islands, are a group of Coral Islands south of Sumatra. Their chief products are copra and coco-nuts. They are under the control of the government of the Straits Settlements, as also is Christmas Island.

FEDERATED MALAY STATES.—These consist of Perak, Selangor, Negri, Sembilan, and Pahang, on the Malay Peninsula. The governor of the Straits Settlements is their High Commissioner.

FEUDATORY MALAY STATES.—These are Kelantin, Trengganu, Kedah, and Perlis. They are under British protection.

The state of Johore is also under British protection.

### QUESTIONS.

1. What do you understand by a Crown Colony?
2. Write all you know about the Straits Settlements. What various territories and islands are included under this name and jurisdiction?
3. Why is Singapore of such importance?
4. What is meant by (a) federated, (b) feudatory states?

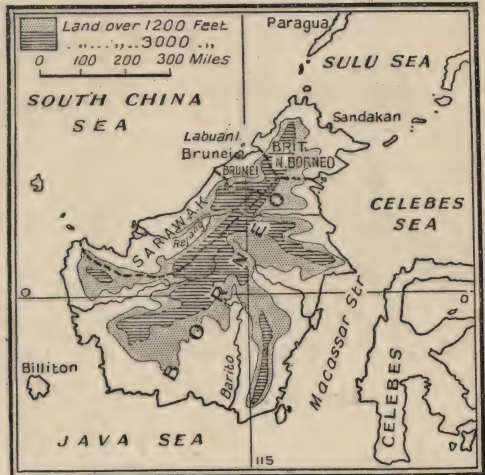
## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE STORY OF BRITISH BORNEO.

With the exception of Australia and New Guinea, Borneo is the largest island in the world, and of this island one-fourth belongs to Great Britain, whilst the remainder is under Dutch protection.

The Dutch were the first Europeans to make any attempt at settlement in Borneo, and by 1604 they had several trading posts established on the island. Five years later, the British East India Company tried to open trade with Borneo. Arriving off the south coast of the island, the English

attempted a landing; but the Dutch, who were already established in the neighbourhood, gathered in force, and drove the English back to their ships. Thereafter more than two centuries were to pass before any appreciable part of the island came under British influence, whilst the Dutch so mismanaged their affairs that by 1809 there were very few Europeans left in Borneo.



At this time the coastal tribes of Borneo lived almost wholly by piracy. Arabs, Chinese, and all the riffraff of the East seemed to find a home upon the island, and these men, combining with the Dyaks, as the natives of Borneo are called, put forth to sea in huge pirate fleets manned by two or three thousand men. Some-

times their voyages lasted over two or three years, and such havoc did these pirates work amongst the ships of civilized nations that trade was almost impossible.



Sir James Brooke.

Such a terrible state of affairs could not be allowed to go on indefinitely, and in 1839 there appeared upon the scene a man who was destined to change the history of the whole northern part of the island.

Sir James Brooke had been a soldier of the East India Company, and during his travels in the East he had seen the awful state of barbarism to which piracy had reduced the natives of Borneo. Thereupon he conceived the noble idea of ridding the Eastern seas of the curse of piracy, and, at the same time, of rescuing the Dyaks from their savage state; and in order to obtain the means of carrying out his ideas, he returned to England.

In England he purchased a small yacht, manned

her with a crew of twenty men, and with these set forth on his great adventure. Did ever man start out on a crusade against such ferocious enemies with so small a following? But, 'Fortune favours the brave,' and Fortune certainly favoured Sir James Brooke and his dauntless band. Arriving off the northern coast of Borneo in 1839, he found the Raja Muda Hassim, uncle to the reigning Sultan, waging war in the province of Sarawak against the pirates and some rebellious Dyak tribes.

This was the very opportunity Brooke was hoping for, and he at once offered his aid to Muda Hassim. The offer was accepted. Marching with the Raja's army, Brooke and his sailors met the insurgents in a pitched battle, and after some hard fighting the rebels were defeated.

Muda Hassim was naturally very grateful for the assistance of the powerful white men, and, the former Raja of Sarawak having been deposed, Sir James Brooke was rewarded for his services by being made Raja in his stead.

Raja Brooke, as we must now call him, thus became virtual owner of a province with an area of about seven thousand square miles. It was peopled by savage tribes sunk in barbarism, and its coast was the haunt of pirates who practised every conceivable cruelty upon the luckless sailors who fell into their hands.

In accordance with his resolve, Raja Brooke's first work was to break up the pirate strongholds. He asked for and obtained the assistance of British warships, and

for some years a relentless war was carried on against the wolves of the sea. The pirates fought desperately, but, one after another, their strongholds were hunted out and destroyed, and at length Raja Brooke could justly claim that piracy was practically at an end in Sarawak. In the course of these operations, the capital of the Sultan of Borneo was bombarded and stormed, and his army put to flight. The Sultan, however, was soon restored to his throne.

Whilst the expeditions against the pirate strongholds were doing their work, Raja Brooke did not lose sight of other reforms required in his new country. He made many reforms in the government, prepared a code of just laws, and looked forward to the development of trade with the outside world as soon as piracy was suppressed.

In 1847 Raja Brooke returned to London, where he was well received, and made Consul-General of Borneo. Returning to the island in 1848, he continued his war against the pirates, and defeated two tribes which had so far refused to acknowledge British rule.

Raja Brooke had done a great work in Borneo ; yet, as is so often the case, there were men jealous of his greatness, who did not hesitate to charge him with many grave misdoings, and once again he had to return to England to face his accusers. In the end the charges were declared "not proven," and Raja Brooke returned to Sarawak.

For the next few years affairs in Sarawak were fairly peaceful, and then in 1857 some Chinese pirates

suddenly rose in revolt, sacked Kuching, the capital of Sarawak, killed several Europeans, and seized the reins of government. Raja Brooke's house was attacked and burnt, the Raja barely having time to escape with his life from his cruel enemies.

But the pirates' triumph was short-lived. Gathering about him a small force of loyal Malays and Dyaks, Raja Brookes attacked the pirates, defeated them with great slaughter, and drove the survivors out of the province.

Raja Brooke died in 1868, but before his death he offered his kingdom to the British Government. The offer was declined, so his nephew, Sir Charles Brooke, succeeded to the title and dominions.

In 1888, however, Great Britain could no longer overlook the land which had been won for her in such a romantic manner. In that year German ships appeared in the Pacific, seeking territory, and Great Britain immediately proclaimed Sarawak and North Borneo to be a British protectorate in order to save them from falling into the hands of Germany. By this act about eighty thousand square miles of territory were added to the Empire.

Sarawak is not the only part of Borneo under the British flag. The British North Borneo Company, established in 1881, has developed the country east of Sarawak, whilst the small state of Brunei, wedged in between the two larger provinces, is also under the protection of Great Britain.

## QUESTIONS.

1. Give a concise history of European relations with Borneo prior to Brooke's coming on the scene.
2. Write a short account of Brooke's early adventures on the island.

## BORNEO'S GREAT MAN.

SIR JAMES BROOKE (1803-1868).

Originally a soldier in the service of the East India Company. Landed in Borneo in 1839, and, having assisted in the defeat of some insurgents in Sarawak, was rewarded for his services by being made Raja of the province. He developed the country, establishing just laws and commerce, and by his energy broke the power of the pirates who had infested Eastern waters for so many years.

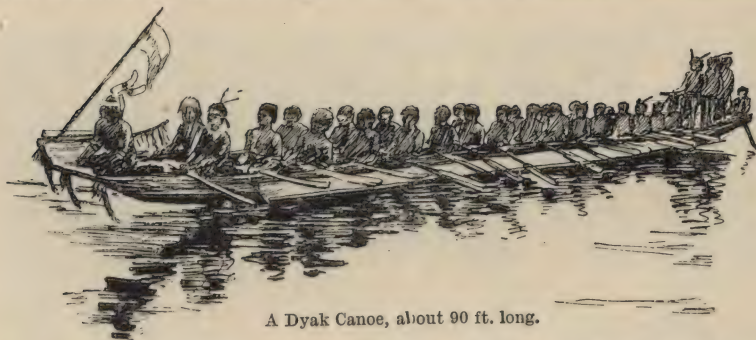
## CHAPTER XIV.

## BRITISH BORNEO TO-DAY.

The greater part of British North Borneo is very hilly, and in some parts mountainous. Its climate is tropical—hot, damp, and very enervating. The country is inhabited by a number of different native tribes, and by many thousand Chinese. All the tribes living along the coast are Malays and of the Mohammedan religion. They are proud and independent folk, and will not work as coolies, nor undertake any menial labour. The hill tribes fear them, and the Chinese respect them.

Amongst the hills and upland valleys live the Dyaks and Dusuns. They are less civilized than the tribes living along the coast. The Dyaks are fighters, but the Dusuns love a peaceful life. It was no doubt on account of their natural love of peace and quiet that

they fled long ago to the seclusion of the hills and sheltered valleys. A Dusun village is a simple affair, consisting usually of one long house or hut divided up into cubicles which open on to a common verandah.



A Dyak Canoe, about 90 ft. long.

In each cubicle an entire family lives. There are from ten to fifteen families in one house, and sometimes, when there are a large number of families in a village, there are two or even three houses.

The Chinamen are the shopkeepers, and their agents always attend the *Tamus* or fairs where the hill people come to barter their goods for those of the Malays of the coast. The Dusuns bring gums, fruits, tapioca, and other things loaded upon buffaloes, and the Malays exchange edible sea-weed, dried fish, and nipa-leaf palm-thatch for roofing purposes.

There are large tobacco plantations, also plantations of coffee, pepper, and spices in Borneo.

The chief town and sea-port is Sandakan.

The island of Labuan is situated six miles off the north-west coast of Borneo. It is now controlled by the

government of the Straits Settlements. The chief food-plant grown is sago, and there are three small factories on the island where raw sago is made into flour. Rice and coco-nuts are also grown.



The interior of a native Long House showing the common verandah, which is also the village street.

It was once thought that Labuan might become as important as Singapore, on account of its coal. But this project has failed, chiefly because the heavy rainfall makes it very difficult to prevent the mines from being flooded. Labuan is now chiefly important as a trading *dépôt*. The natives from the coast of Borneo bring over edible birds' nests, beeswax, gutta percha, camphor, and other products of their country, to sell to the

Chinese shopkeepers, who, in their turn, sell them to Singapore.

About fifty Europeans live on Labuan Island.



A COAST VILLAGE IN BRITISH NORTH BORNEO.

### QUESTIONS.

1. What different native tribes inhabit British North Borneo? Find out all you can about them.
2. What are the chief productions of this island?
3. Give some account of Labuan Island.

## CHAPTER XV.

### HONG KONG.

Hong Kong, at the mouth of the Canton River off the south-eastern coast of China, although only a small island, is an important Crown Colony in the Far East. It originally belonged to China, and was first ceded to Great Britain in 1841, this cession being confirmed by the Treaty of Nanking in the following year.

Inland, Hong Kong is mountainous throughout. It is to these mountains, which provide it with a good supply of fresh water, that the island owes its name, which is properly *Hiang Kiang*, that is, "Fragrant

Waters." The country, however, has a wild and monotonous appearance, the hills being bare of trees, and the only greenery that of the brushwood and coarse grasses which grow along the banks of the streams. In those places along the coast, where the mountains do not



Hong Kong.

actually reach right down to the sea in the form of great, overhanging cliffs and precipices, rice, yams, and sweet potatoes are grown in the warm, moist climate. The rainy season in Hong Kong lasts from May until the beginning of August, during which time it

rains almost without ceasing. Pears, oranges, and mangoes, are native fruits, as also the delicious pulpy fruit called the *lichi* (or *litchi*). The animals include a land tortoise, the armadillo, the woodcock, a few poisonous snakes, a kind of boa, and white ants, which last do much damage to the public works.

When viewed from the sea, and especially from the harbour, Hong Kong appears to be a beautiful island. The harbour is a magnificent stretch of water, enclosing ten square miles of sea, and having two entrances. Facing it is the capital, Victoria. This city has been built up in three stages. Nearest to the sea is the *Praya*\* or esplanade, which is very busy in connection with the shipping. Ships come to Hong Kong from all parts of the world, particularly from Europe, bringing and taking away all kinds of merchandise.

\* A term used in India and the Far East for an embanked walk along a shore. It is a form of the Portuguese *praia*, meaning "shore."

Behind the *Praya* is the principal commercial street, and beyond that, on either side, is the Chinese quarter, where the people are so closely packed together that you would think they scarcely had room to breathe, much less to live.



The Harbour, Hong Kong.

Indeed, so dense is the native population of Hong Kong, that numbers of families live entirely in junks, or native boats, placed closely together around the island.

A ten minutes' climb brings one to the next part of the city, where are the Government House, and other important public buildings. There are some fine public gardens, and well-made roads, "some of them bordered with bamboos and other delicately-fronded

trees, and fringed with the luxuriant growth of semi-tropical vegetation." The third and highest stage, known as "the Peak," is dotted with houses and bungalows, and is the summer resort of those who are able to go there for change of air and scene.

In addition to the growing of vegetables, the Chinese in Hong Kong quarry for building stone, and they are also engaged in the manufacture of cotton goods, cement, and paper, in wood and ivory carving, in gold beating, furniture making, and many other crafts and industries.

Opposite to Victoria is the little peninsula of Kowloon, on the mainland of China, which also forms part of the Empire. It was added to Hong Kong under the Peking Treaty of 1860. In 1898 China leased to Great Britain, for ninety-nine years, an area of 376 square miles around and behind Kowloon. This territory is mountainous, and in the fertile valleys excellent crops of rice, sugar cane, indigo, hemp, and many different kinds of fruit and vegetables are grown.

The agricultural inhabitants of the valleys are Cantonese; they are also excellent traders. Hakkas (Cantonese for "Strangers") chiefly inhabit the hilly parts; they are a hardy and frugal people.

### QUESTIONS.

1. For what reason is Hong Kong so important to the Empire?
2. What is the meaning of its name? Why was it so called?
3. Describe, as fully as you can, the appearance of the island (*a*) as seen from the sea, (*b*) inland. What different plants and animals are found in Hong Kong?

4. Write all you know about Victoria.
5. How do the Chinese in Hong Kong live? In what various occupations are they engaged?
6. Give some information about the peninsula of Kowloon.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## NEW GUINEA.



New Guinea.

The territory of Papua (or British New Guinea), which is the land round the Gulf of Papua in the south-east of the island of New Guinea, was annexed to the British Empire in 1888.\* After the Great War, what was originally German New Guinea in the north of the island, with the Bismarck Archipelago in the east, and the port of Rabaul, situated on the island of New

\* For a time it was a Crown Colony in association with Queensland, but since 1901 it has been under the control of the Australian Commonwealth.

Britain, was added to the British possessions, which are all now under the administration of the Australian Commonwealth.

The whole of Papua is practically within ten degrees of the equator, and its climate is therefore hot and unhealthy. But the soil is rich and well watered



A Large Trading Canoe used by the Natives of British New Guinea.

by the heavy monsoon rains, and almost every kind of tropical product grows wild or is cultivated. A certain number of white people live there, but by far the greater number of the population are natives.

The tribes living along the coast fish for pearls, turtles, and trepand; and, in addition to fish, they eat coco-nuts and sago. Inland, where much of the country

is covered with thick impenetrable forests, other tribes make their homes and grow yams and bananas in clearings amongst the trees. But owing to the thickness of the forests and jungle, and the hostility of the people



THE CHIEFS OF THE DIFFERENT TRIBES IN THE BUNA DIVISION, BRITISH NEW GUINEA, ASSEMBLED TO EXECUTE THEIR ANNUAL TRIBAL DANCES.

there, some of whom are cannibals, but little is really known as yet about this part of Papua. The natives are of the negro type, but with frizzly hair rather than woolly. In colour, they vary from dark brown to black.

Gold, copper, other minerals, and oil are also found in this island. There are rubber, hemp, tea, coffee, tobacco and other plantations.

## QUESTIONS.

1. What is the extent of the British possessions in New Guinea ?
2. Give some description of the natives of Papua.
3. What are the chief products of Papua ?

## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE MELANESIAN ISLANDS.

These islands lie in the Pacific, east of New Guinea and Queensland. Three groups form part of the British Empire.

The SOLOMON ISLANDS are a group of high islands with many active volcanoes, some attaining a height of ten thousand feet. They are covered with dense tropical forests, and mangrove swamps fringe the shores. The climate is very hot, damp, and unhealthy. All sorts of tropical fruits are grown and exported. The natives are black, with frizzly hair. Inland, amidst the forests, a race of pygmy people are believed to exist.

The NEW HEBRIDES are governed by the British and French together. They are similar to the Solomon Isles. Coffee, maize, sulphur, and timber are exported.

The FIJI ISLANDS were first discovered for Europe by the explorer Tasman, in 1643. They are the most important of the Melanesian Islands that we possess. The mountains are not so high, rising only to about four thousand feet above sea-level. But they are chiefly volcanoes. Hence the soil is rich and fertile, and, with the additional aid of the heat and heavy rains, valuable and heavy crops are produced, including

sugar, coco-nuts, bread fruit, and bananas. Reefs of coral fringe the coasts of these islands.

### QUESTIONS.

1. Where are the Melanesian Islands? Which of them form part of the British Empire?
2. What are the chief exports of these islands?

### BOOKS FOR FURTHER READING.

- The Channel Islands.** By EDITH F. CAREY. *A. & C. Black.*
- The Odd Man in Malta.** By JOHN WIGNACOURT. *Chapman & Hall.*
- Malta.** By FREDERICK W. RYAN. *A. & C. Black.*
- Malta and Gibraltar.** By ALLISTER MACMILLAN. *W. H. & L. Collingridge.*
- The Other Side of the Lantern.** By SIR FREDERICK TREVES. *Cassell & Co.*
- Ceylon.** By ALFRED CLARK. "Peeps at Many Lands" Series. *A. & C. Black.*
- Through Central Borneo.** By CARL LUMBOLTZ. *T. Fisher Unwin.*
- The New World of To-day.** By A. R. HOPE MONCRIEFF. *Gresham Publishing Co.*
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- Children's Colour Book of Lands and Peoples.** Edited by J. A. HAMMERTON. *The Amalgamated Press.*
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- The Encyclopedia Britannica.**

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